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ABSTRACT

This learning guide on assisting at-risk populations is part of a series of learning guides developed for competency-based adult consumer and homemaking education programs in community colleges, adult education centers, community centers, and the workplace. Focus is on the connections among personal, family, and job responsibilities so that these aspects of living will complement each other. Introductory material includes general guidelines/check list for users with key to symbols used to designate enhancement activities and general comments on assisting at-risk populations. The guide is divided into two parts that deal with the at-risk populations of dropouts and homeless persons. Competencies are identified for each part with a set of outcomes, definitions, key ideas, facilitator strategies, and learner activities. Supplementary and resource aids are listed at the end of the sections. Three competencies are addressed for dropouts: analyze reasons for dropping out of school; identify constructive ways to reinforce self esteem; and identify sources of assistance for achieving personal goals. Seventeen supplements contain information and activity sheets on the following: potential dropouts, reasons for dropping out, self-confidence, self-esteem, goal setting, and resources. This section contains 21 references. Four competencies related to the homeless are addressed: explain the circumstances which contribute to homelessness; identify problems resulting from homelessness and ways these might be resolved; describe ways in which homeless persons may seek to satisfy their human needs; and determine available sources of help for individuals and families facing homelessness. Twelve supplements include information and activity sheets on the following: housing crises, interpersonal crises, danger signals of becoming homeless, poverty, empathy, and government, community, and local sources of help. This section lists 27 references. (YLB)

ED 388 820

11

Assisting At-Risk Populations

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General Guidelines/Checklist for Users

The terms "facilitator" and "learner" are used throughout to describe the instructor and participants.

STRATEGIES (for facilitators) and ACTIVITIES (for learners) as stated in the guide, are not always parallel as to numbering system.

Facilitators need to find out where learners are with each of the competencies. For example, if working with students who are at risk of dropping out of school or with adults who are at risk of becoming homeless, the facilitator may choose to do all the competencies.

Key to Symbols - The following symbols are used throughout the guides to designate enhancement activities:

- related basic skills, giving particular attention to language arts and mathematics
- related decision-making and problem-solving skills, including the application and transferability of these skills to personal, family, and work responsibilities to be demonstrated
- enrichment activities according to learner abilities and experiences
- interrelationship of concepts to personal, family, and work
- influence of technology on the subject matter, application of knowledge, and related work
- pre- and/or posttest assessment activities

Part I - Introduction to Dropout

Competency #1 - Analyze reasons for dropping out of school.

_____The facilitator may choose to familiarize self with the characteristics of at-risk students by using Supplement 1.

_____Duplicate Supplement 2 as a handout for use with Method 3.

_____Duplicate Supplement 3 as needed for Method 4.

_____The facilitator, if appropriate, may wish to invite a resource person to share pros and cons of staying or dropping out of school.

_____Duplicate Supplement 4 for Activity 2.

_____The facilitator may need art supplies such as poster boards, markers, cut outs from newspapers, and magazines to aid the learner in developing posters that encourage kids to stay in school (see Activity 4).

_____Duplicate Supplement 5 for Activity 5.

_____Duplicate Supplement 6 as needed for Activity 6.

Competency #2 - Identify constructive ways to reinforce self-esteem.

_____The facilitator should have prepared a collection of magazines and advertisements to aid in completing Methods 1 and 4.

_____Duplicate Supplement 7 to be used with Method 2.

_____The facilitator might invite a salesperson to discuss questions in Method 3.

_____Duplicate Supplement 8 for Method 6.

_____Duplicate Supplement 9 for Method 7.

_____Duplicate Supplements 10 and 11 for Method 8.

_____Duplicate Supplement 12 for Method 10.

_____The facilitator may wish to bring pictures from catalogs or magazines of the listed shoes for Method 11.

_____Duplicate Supplement 14a and 14b for Method 11.

_____The facilitator will need to prepare "I Am Lovable and Capable" signs for each learner as listed in Method 12, Supplement 15.

_____Duplicate Supplement 13 if used for Activity 4.

Competency #3 - Identify sources of assistance for achieving personal goals.

_____The facilitator should arrange for resource people for Methods 1 and 2.

_____The facilitator will need a roll of Life Saver candy for Method 3.

_____Prepare Supplement 16 as a transparency for Method 4.

_____Duplicate Supplement 17 for a resource guide for learners to keep in their possession.

_____The facilitator will need to prepare a number of footprints cut out of construction paper for Activity 3.

Part II - Homeless

Competency #1 - Explain the circumstances which contribute to homelessness.

_____The facilitator might decide to dress as a homeless person to help identify attitudes, behaviors, and comments from learners.

_____For Method 3, the facilitator might display pictures of low cost housing, invite a resource person to discuss low income housing, or duplicate Supplement 1.

_____Duplicate Supplement 2 to use with Method 4 and Activity 4.

_____Duplicate Supplement 3 to discuss danger signals of becoming homeless. Use with Method 6 and Activity 2.

Competency #2 - Identify problems resulting from homelessness and ways these might be resolved.

_____Duplicate Supplement 4 as an overhead to help learners identify a definition for poverty.

_____Duplicate Supplement 5 to use as a handout for Activity 1.

_____Duplicate Supplement 6 for Activity 3.

Competency #3 - Describe ways in which homeless persons may seek to satisfy their human needs.

_____Prepare Supplement 7 as an overhead to discuss points listed in Method 2.

_____Duplicate Supplement 8 for the discussion in Method 3.

_____Duplicate Supplement 9 to be used for Activity 1.

_____Duplicate Supplement 10 for Activity 2.

Competency #4 - Determine available sources of help for individuals and families facing homelessness.

_____Duplicate Supplement 11 for Activity 4.

_____Duplicate Supplement 12 for Methods 1 and 4.

Assisting At-Risk Populations

This guide offers basic information that is important for at-risk populations, but does not contain everything that is known or could be helpful in assisting at-risk populations.

The format of this guide is divided into two parts. Part I which deals with the at-risk population of dropouts and Part II which deals with the at-risk population of the homeless. Competencies are identified for each part with a set of outcomes, definitions, key ideas, facilitator strategies, and learner activities. Supplementary and resource aids are listed at the end of the sections.

Three major competencies that have been addressed for the at-risk population (dropouts) are as follow:

1. Analyze reasons for dropping out of school.
2. Identify constructive ways to reinforce self-esteem.
3. Identify sources of assistance for achieving personal goals.

The following are four competencies addressed for the at-risk population (homeless):

1. Identify problems resulting from homelessness and ways these might be resolved.
2. Explain the circumstances which contribute to homelessness.
3. Describe ways in which homeless persons may seek to satisfy their human needs.
4. Determine available sources of help for individuals and families facing homelessness.

Additional topics which the facilitator may choose to include could be evaluating options for training and development of job skills and planning activities for obtaining a job.

Special Notation for the Facilitator

Behavioral styles which may help the facilitator to enhance self-esteem in at-risk populations are

- really listening to students;
- talking with rather than talking to students;
- cutting down on advice-giving;
- trusting students;
- allowing a wide variety of choices;
- giving consistent, regular, small praise, and positive notice;
- sharing adult inner feelings, problems, and worries, where appropriate, and the process of coping with them and solving them;
- taking learners seriously—never laughing at or seeing them as cute;
- sharing the tasks and responsibilities; giving learners a real place in the "economy and ecology" of the classroom; and
- allowing learners to have the real consequences of their choices (with moderation added for the negative ones) instead of no consequences (overprotection) or massive consequences (overwhelming).

The facilitator's effectiveness will expand in direct relation to his/her personal comfort level with these concepts. They are meant only to guide, not to dictate, personal style (Chamberlain, 1992).

Why Focus on At-Risk Populations?

The three systems of family, church, and school have been changing along with the total society and may no longer provide the foundations of nurturing, support, and knowledge which were once their hallmark.

The changes in family structure and dynamics have resulted in a dramatic increase in children's problems. Many young people appear to have difficulty in dealing with their own growth and development, interpersonal relationships, problem solving, and setting and attainment of goals.

At-risk adults are persons not employed at nor near their productive capacity because of their personal circumstances or changes in the workplace. These adults include welfare recipients, displaced homemakers, dislocated workers, and people whose skills are rendered obsolete by advancing technology (Gold, 1990).

Who Are At-Risk Learners?

Learners who are "at risk" emerge from school unprepared for further education or for the kind of work there is to do. Unfortunately, many are ready for lives of alienation and dependency.

An at-risk learner is one who has left school or is predictably in danger of leaving school without the skills to be a productive and self-reliant citizen and to succeed in today's workplace and, hence, in society.

One child in every four is poor, one in five is at risk of becoming a teen parent, one in six has no health insurance, one in seven is at risk of dropping out of school. (Childrens Defense Fund, 1988).

What Behaviors and Backgrounds Are Identified With Learners At Risk?

Research relates certain behaviors as failing to graduate from high school and/or failing to acquire important knowledge and skills as indicators of "learners at risk." Certain behaviors that put learners at risk are not attending school regularly, not being engaged in classroom/school activities, not succeeding on daily assignments, using drugs and alcohol, committing disruptive and delinquent acts, becoming pregnant and having to care for a baby, and attempting suicide.

Other indicators used to identify those at risk relate to their background. Traditionally, poverty and low English proficiency have been used as indicators because of their relationship to low school achievement and to other at-risk behaviors. Demographic trends are also background indicators of the at risk. Some include adults who were born to a teenage or single-parent, raised in a "blended" family, or could be described as "latchkey" children.

The following "Characteristics of At-Risk Students" summarizes the variety of factors which may put students at risk. While the list tends to describe students, it is apparent that certain characteristics related to families, health, economies, and others have an impact on describing circumstances leading to dropout and/or homelessness.

Characteristics of At-Risk Students

Students who have *school-related problems* because they . . .
- are learning disabled
- are below grade level
- have repeated grades
- have low intelligence test scores
- have experienced school failures
- have poor reading/math basic skills
- have limited English proficiency
- are underachievers
- are gifted
- are bored
- have been expelled/suspended
- are frequently tardy/truant
- move frequently
- create safety problems
- are disciplinary problems
- are hostile, passive, or apathetic

Students from *families* with . . .
- criminal acts
- acts of vandalism
- acts of violence
- being generally disruptive
- a low level of social maturity

Students from *families* with . . .
- a history of dropouts
- low parental/sibling educational attainment
- second/third generations of anti-school attitudes
- low-aspirations
- low expectations for student performance in school
- no rewards for student for performing well in school
- unstable living conditions
- migrant-worker jobs
- no shelter
- a single parent
- two working parents
- foster parents
- young sibling child care needs
- criminal histories
- substance abuse activities
- physical abuse activities

Students with *economic needs* because of . . .
- unemployed parents
- a low family income level
- a recent transition to a lower income
- a need to support themselves

Students with *physical health problems* such as . . .
- a chronic illness
- a communicable disease
- a pregnancy
- a physically disabling condition
- malnutrition
- substance abuse problems

Students with *mental health problems* such as . . .
- depression
- a diagnosed mentally disabling condition
- suicidal, personally destructive behavior
- low self-esteem/self-concept
- no goals or direction for life
- having been a victim of physical and/or sexual abuse
- being under stress
- having no stable support system
- feelings of alienation

Students who have *other characteristics* such as being . . .
- members of racial or ethnic minorities
- members of language minority groups
- immigrants
- from inner city/urban areas
- teenage mothers/fathers
- unwed mothers/fathers
- in need of child care support
- in planning stages for marriage before completing high school
- students with multiple needs

Source: Chamberlain (1992), p. 233

Part I: Introduction to Dropout

The social, economic, and political costs of the dropout problem have been well-documented. Costs are figured in lost tax revenues and payments to welfare recipients annually, and lifetime earnings loss of a dropout. Poorly motivated youth lack fundamental literacy skills and are unacquainted with the responsibilities of the world of work and therefore have problems entering the labor force.

The National Dropout Prevention Network reports the following research:

- A dropout will earn $250,000 less than a high school graduate over the course of a lifetime.
- Unemployment rates for high school dropouts are about five times that of college graduates (Gold, 1990).
- Each year's new crop of dropouts may cost the nation as much as $240 billion in crime, welfare, health care, and social services.
- For every dollar spent on education, it costs $9 to provide services to dropouts.
- Illinois State Board of Education reported that for 1992-1993 the annual dropout rate was 6.628% or 34,639 high school students.
- Roughly 80% of prison inmates are dropouts. In Illinois, it costs nearly $36,000 per year to keep a juvenile offender in a youth center.
- Adult prisoners cost Illinois an average of $25,000 a year.

Self-esteem is the basic foundation for long-term personal health and happiness. One can develop a sense of control about one's future, manage one's sense of moral worth, and accept love and respect one richly deserves.

Analyze Reasons for Dropping Out of School.

Learner Outcomes

- Identify characteristics of dropouts.
- Develop awareness of circumstances which contribute to dropping out of school.
- Identify the effect dropping out of school has on oneself and other people who care.

Definitions

Dropout - one who has left school or is predictably in danger of leaving school

Key Ideas

Characteristics of potential dropouts can be identified.

A high school diploma is essential in today's society/world.

There are a number of people who care if one stays in school.

Reasons that youth may drop out of school are as follow:

FAMILY-RELATED AND PERSONAL REASONS—Many young people have problems at home that make it difficult for them to concentrate on schoolwork, to feel good about themselves, or to trust adults enough to feel safe in the school environment. Their problems include living in poverty, lack of interest from their parents, high mobility, abuse and neglect, substance abuse, a range of health issues, and, for an increasing number of young people, homelessness.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES—Society and schools are set up to reflect one set of cultural experiences and values. Yet society is made up of a wide range of cultures. Within these cultures are cognitive and practical differences that make the present school structure difficult for some children and youth.

GENDER DIFFERENCES—Inequitable treatment of girls and boys in the schools was recognized as a serious problem years ago by Congress. Federal law requires that schools provide equitable resources for both genders. Yet sex-role stereotyping persists, and may be responsible for keeping some learners at risk.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND POLICIES—While some students drop out of school, others are pushed out, squeezed out, or left out. In order to reach all youth, schools must be structured in ways that reflect the developmental stages that students go through, meet the real needs that today's students have, and put in place and implement policies that work for the good of all students (Nash, 1990).

Strategies/Methods

1. Supplement 1, "Characteristics of the Potential Dropout," may aid the facilitator in identifying the potential dropout. This list is not meant to be utilized as a tool for labeling learners as potential dropouts. Rather, it is meant to point out some characteristics of potential dropouts identified in literature and research. The list may prove useful as a frame of reference in looking at the overall view of what can be done in dropout prevention.

2. The facilitator should be prepared to lead a discussion as to reasons for dropping out of school (see "Key Ideas") before Activity 3 on reasons why students drop out of school. The facilitator can guide learners in group work (Activity 3) to make suggestions for solutions.

3. Using Supplement 2, "You Can Do a Lot in School," as a handout, the facilitator can stress the importance of each suggestion to help learners make the most out of school. The important point is for facilitator to stress the importance of staying in school to get a high school diploma.

4. Using Supplement 3, "People Care," as a handout, the facilitator can stress that other people do care about a learner's future. Emphasize that not only parents but others out there care. Stress that success depends on staying in school.

5. The facilitator may wish to invite a resource person who left school to talk with the learners as to reasons for leaving, problems before and after leaving, the reactions of family and friends, and what would be done differently if given the chance.

6. The facilitator might consider conducting a class discussion about how learners view their school. What do they like about it? What don't they like? Do they have any constructive ideas about how to make the school a better place to learn? If appropriate, the facilitator may want to help learners draft a letter to the school administrator(s), or set up a meeting between administrators and several learners to discuss concerns.

Suggested Activities

1. Have learners share or relate situations where they may know of someone who has dropped out of school. Describe characteristics that could have contributed to the dropout.

2. Using Supplement 4, "Students' Reasons for Dropping Out of School," have learners select two of the reasons given and name an actual situation a learner may be in that could encourage a dropout. Have learners list other reasons why students may drop out of school and add to the Supplement 4 listing. Ask learners to brainstorm some suggestions that might have helped in certain situations.

3. Have students divide into groups and assign each group a reason for dropping out of school (family-related, cultural, gender, or school structure) as listed in "Key Ideas." Ask learners to give examples of situations that could cause a student to drop out of school (e.g., poverty and homelessness may attribute to the fact that the student would drop out of school because he or she has no money to buy clothes to wear to school). Suggest possible solutions to problem (e.g., Salvation Army surplus for clothing or other resources for help).

4. Have learners create a variety of posters encouraging students to stay in school. Devise a plan to select several posters to be recommended for posting in a school's guidance office and in other high-traffic areas such as the cafeteria, gym/locker room, and hallways.

5. Using Supplement 5, "Case History #1," have the learner read the situation and answer the questions provided in the supplement.

6. Using Supplement 6, "Psychological and Sociological Factors. . .," have learner volunteer any examples of an acquaintance who may be affected by the listed factors. (An example of peer pressure and peer violence could be that gang relations may force a student to quit attending school or actually drop out of school.)

Identify Constructive Ways to Reinforce Self-Esteem.

Learner Outcome

- Determine the relationship between social problems and low self-esteem.
- Relate psychological needs to enhancing self-esteem.
- Participate in self-awareness activities for personal enhancement of self-esteem.

Definitions

self-esteem	- what we think we are worth
self-concept	- thoughts one has about self
self-image	- picture of self that is presented to others
psychological	- identity, connectedness, power, meaning, and variety of needs

Key Ideas

Self-concept or self-image is the set of beliefs one has about oneself. For instance, most persons hold a "picture" of themselves based on their sex, race, nationality, physical features, roles, aptitudes, or attributes. This is self-concept identity and it serves to focus one's existence. One's level of self-esteem (or self-love, self-respect, self-worth), concerns how much one likes or approves of one's self-concept. It is the "grade" we give ourself.

No one is born with intact self-concept or self-esteem. The basic ideas one has about one's self are acquired from two main sources: how others treat us and what they told us about ourselves. The amount of affection, food, touching, physical care, and warmth one receives conveys a nonverbal aspect of love and worthiness. One learns basic ideas about who we are, and who we should be, early in life (Sanford & Donovan, 1986).

The four basic components of self-esteem are **significance**–whether one feels belonging, acceptance, or attention and affection from others; **competence**–whether one feels competent to master challenges and activities; **power**–it is helpful for one to feel independent and have the ability to control one's behavior and gain respect of others; **virtue**–feelings of worthiness, and generosity judged by significant others.

How you feel about yourself directly affects how you live your life and how you relate to others.

Strategies/Methods

1. The facilitator may introduce this competency by having learners construct a personality collage. Direct learners to look through magazines to find pictures that best depict as many characteristics about their personality as they can find. Learners can paste these pictures on a poster, file folder, or construction paper. Stress that each person holds a set of characteristics that is unique to him/herself. Make sure learners pick out good things about themselves.

2. The facilitator may choose to help learners identify with some psychological needs important to reinforce self-esteem by reading and discussing Supplement 7, "Psychological Needs" (e.g., a high school diploma will encourage a goal for the future).

3. Invite a salesperson, such as a car salesperson, to come to class and discuss how he/she convinces people of the worth of a product (car). Ask these questions:

   - How do you "psyche" yourself before you meet a customer?
   - How does one behave in order to show confidence and poise?
   - Does one kind of person sell more than another?
   - What qualities should a person have to be a good salesperson?

   Following the discussion, ask learners to analyze the sales person's "secrets." Ask learners to decide what they can do to have a better feeling about themselves. Ask learners what they can do to show others they care about themselves.

4. The facilitator might ask learners to list what affects self-confidence and self-esteem. Examples from a TV commercial for beauty aids for men and women or advertisements for headache remedies can be used. Note how the person in pain is shown with uncombed hair and no make-up. Then to show a change, the advertiser usually shows a brighter person–one who has been given a nice hairdo and nice clothes. Ask learners to discuss effects a poor personal appearance might have on self-confidence, self-esteem, or performance in getting and keeping a job.

5. The facilitator may suggest that learners keep a diary or list of the times that learners feel successful–Where are they? What are they doing? and Why do they feel successful?

6. The facilitator could use Supplement 8, "The Confidence Game," with learners to brainstorm ways to increase self-confidence. Suggest learners put this supplement or their list in a place where they can see and review it daily.

7. The facilitator might promote a positive approach for learners to address self-esteem using Supplement 9, "The Positive Approach." Discuss with the learners ways to promote high self-esteem. Have learner brainstorm new ideas or quotes that may help them. Suggest they keep this list with them every day!

8. The facilitator may read or have learners read Supplement 10, "I Am Me." Stress the important characteristics that are individual to all learners. Using Supplement 11, "My Declaration of Self-Esteem," encourage learners to read, sign, and plan to improve self-confidence and self-esteem. The facilitator may wish to make a ceremony of the awarding of the certificates.

9. The facilitator may choose to discuss how a family's love, support and encouragement can affect self-esteem. Suggest that the learners identify areas where their family may not have been strong in communication, dealing with family crises, or showing affection. This activity may help the learner identify possible contributions to low self-esteem.

10. Supplement 12, "Characteristics of High and Low Self-Esteem" can be used as an assessment tool to determine learners identification of high and low self-esteem phrases. Ask learners to correct the phrases that characterize low self-esteem.

Suggested Activities

11. The facilitator might collect pictures of different types of shoes from magazines (types listed in Supplement 14A). Ask learners to read Supplement 14A, "If the Shoe Fits . . .," and have learners rate themselves in relation to the type of shoe. Discuss how shoes are like people. Use Supplement 14B as a summary for this strategy.

12. The facilitator will ask learners to listen as he/she reads Supplement 15, "I Am Lovable and Capable." As the facilitator describes the day's routine, learners should be instructed to tear pieces of their "I Am Lovable and Capable" sign off for the self-destructive events and feelings that happen. The facilitator may choose to add or to change events of the day. Discuss the following questions with the learners:

    - How did you feel when tearing off part of your sign? What things affected you most?
    - What control do you have over your IALAC sign?
    - What could you have done to avoid tearing your IALAC sign?
    - How does the condition of your IALAC sign affect how you feel about yourself? Family? Others?
    - How does the condition of your IALAC sign affect how your family and others feel about you?
    - How can you handle yourself when your IALAC sign is torn?

1. Have learners make a list of heavy negative statements or feelings of self-worth. For example: No one cares; I'm stupid; I can't. Have learner crumple list up and toss it around among the members in class. Instruct learners to throw the list in the trash. This may create an interest in the development of new self-esteem.

2. Have learners make a list of all the good things they have done lately to be a good citizen. (Example: turned off lights after left room to save energy or volunteered to help someone in need.) Have learner "Pat oneself on the back" for being a good person. (Facilitator may give a smiley face sticker.) "Unless one believes they are a good person, one will not convince anyone else."

3. Have learners divide a piece of paper into two columns, one titled "UP TIMES" and the other "DOWN TIMES." Learners must list in the first column all of those things which make them feel very good about themselves. In the second column, the learners will list all those things that make them wish they were someone else. After completing the activity, discuss how one can keep from having bad moods. Discuss the idea that people who do not show their "highs" and "lows" are more pleasing to work with, communicate with, and have as friends.

4. Have learners complete Supplement 13, "Understanding That Other People Have Feelings Too." Share reasons why people react or do what they do.

5. Have each learner observe many different people. Then select one person who is giving "bad vibes" with his/her personal appearance. The learner should decide how the person would have to change in order to get and keep a job, how the person might feel about himself. Have learner take a good look in his/her mirror and make a list of things one would have to change in order to feel good about him/herself or be presentable for a job interview.

COMPETENCY THREE

Identify Sources of Assistance for Achieving Personal Goals.

Learner Outcome

- Develop a personal list of programs, people, and sources of help for improving self-worth and belonging.
- Recognize the importance of personal goals.

Definitions

goals - something a person consciously intends to get, achieve, do, or accomplish in life; can be long-term or short-term

Key Ideas

Goals tell a person where he/she wants to go in life. When a person knows what his/her goals are, the decision-making choices are often clearer. Goals can give specific direction. When specific goals are identified and realistically set, the results will be greater personal satisfaction. Personal goal setting for the at-risk student is very crucial in controlling behavior, developing self-esteem, and gaining affection and attention from others.

Personal interest in career choices plays an important part in a dropout's career planning goal. The learner must like what he/she will be doing in the lifelong career before he/she can develop self-confidence and job satisfaction.

Strategies/Methods

1. If appropriate, the facilitator may wish to explore alternative high school programs in the area. (Note that a partial listing is available with resources in Supplement 17 if needed.) Discuss with learners the differences of alternative and conventional high school programs, including attitudes of students and career goals.

   An alternate strategy can be to invite one or more representatives of alternative programs to speak to the class about the programs.

2. To help the learner relate school-related experiences to participation in vocational programs, invite a guest speaker to explain his/her job responsibility. Ask the speaker to provide information about area job opportunities, area vocational training facilities, and what skills employers are looking for.

3. The facilitator might pass out a piece of "Life Saver" candy to each learner (to focus on term). Ask learners "Who or what is a lifesaver to you right now?" Answers could be a best friend, a pet, school, or some activity in which they are involved. Stress that what is important to a person is a reflection of his/her values. Values shape personal goals.

4. Using Supplement 16, "Goal Setting," as a transparency, discuss the guidelines for setting goals.

5. The facilitator should stress to the learners the importance of goal setting in dropout prevention activities. The facilitator should make points about developing attainable personal goals.

6. Using Supplement 17, "Resource Guide to Dropout Sources and Prevention," help learners identify with programs and sources of help that are available for their encouragement to stay in school. (Note: Facilitator may investigate similar local agencies within area.)

Suggested Activities

1. Learners may adopt a grandparent from a local senior citizens center or select their own grandparents. Ask grandparents to share their knowledge, skills, and assistance to teachers and other school staff. Have the learners ask the grandparents to tell why learners should stay in school, and why staying in school would enhance career possibilities and life experiences. Learners may also bring grandparents to class as resource speakers. Videotaped interviews would be another alternative. ◘

2. Have learners think about and jot down where they would like to be in five or ten years and what they would like to be doing. Determine qualifications and skills needed.

3. Have learners write down three future long-term goals and three short-term goals on a footprint cut out of construction paper. Have learners mount footprints on a larger piece of paper so they can visualize goals they have set.

4. Have each learner identify a community-based employee that they would like to job shadow (observe work activities, job responsibilities within a day). Ask learner to keep a time sheet, a journal of activities, and a diary of thoughts about the job. Have learner report to the group his/her experience of job shadowing and the effect this may or may not have on career planning.

5. Have learners develop a list of people and/or resources (Supplement 17) that may be available in their local area to address their particular needs. ◘

SUPPLEMENT 1

Characteristics of the Potential Dropout

- low math and reading scores
- failure in one or more schools
- low perceptual performance
- frequent health problems
- absence of father from home
- verbal deficiency
- racial or ethnic minority
- unable to identify with other people
- failure of grade or failure in reading
- low self-concept/low level of self-esteem
- siblings or parents have been dropouts
- inability to relate to authority figures
- lack or identification with school; expressed feelings of not belonging
- poor social adjustment; perhaps socially or emotionally disturbed
- failure to see relevance of education to life's experiences
- disruptive behavior and rebellious attitudes toward authority
- friends are outside of the school, usually older dropouts
- poor grades
- family problems
- lack of basic skills
- non-English speaking home
- more mobile than other students
- low educational level of parents
- excessively stressful home life
- absenteeism/truancy/frequent tardiness
- limited extracurricular participation
- tend to come from low-income families
- unable to tolerate structured activities
- gifted and talented student (frequently bored with school)
- immature, suggestible, easily distracted, lacks future orientation
- usually "loners" and generally not accepted by their peers
- communication between home and school is usually poor

17

Source: *Staying in: A dropout prevention handbook K-12.* (1979). Madison: Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

SUPPLEMENT 2

You Can Do a Lot in School

WATCH YOUR BEHAVIOR

FOLLOW THE RULES

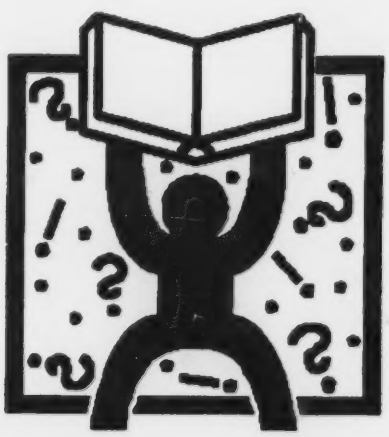
TIME YOURSELF

GET ALONG

SHOW RESPECT

STUDY & DO HOMEWORK

YOU ARE ONLY IN SCHOOL A SHORT TIME IN YOUR LIFE.
MAKE THE MOST OF IT!!!



SUPPLEMENT 3

People Care

PARENTS CARE

BUSINESS CARES

COMMUNITY CARES

MILITARY CARES

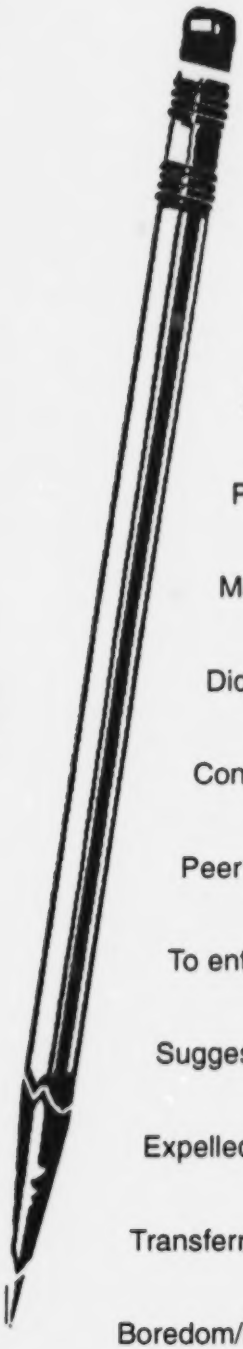
SCHOOL CARES

LOCAL, STATE, & FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CARES

THEY WANT YOU TO STAY IN SCHOOL

SUPPLEMENT 4

Students' Reasons for Dropping Out of School



Didn't like school

Work

Academic weakness

Pregnancy

School environment

Personal or family problems

Marriage

Didn't see value of school

Conflict with teachers

Peer acceptance/pressure

To enter the service

Suggested by the school

Expelled by the school

Transferred/moved

Boredom/lost interest

SUPPLEMENT 5

Case History #1

Pablo shares characteristics common to many dropouts. Now 15 years old, Pablo grew up in a reconstituted family (his mother divorced and remarried when Pablo was 5 years old). Both his mother and stepfather have steady jobs. Pablo's relationship with his parents is poor; he says his stepfather is very cold, and his relationship with his mother is distant and full of conflicts.

At the age of 6, Pablo was physically beaten by his stepfather. During an argument, the boy was picked up by his hair, called demeaning names, and thrown onto the stairs. Physical confrontations continued during Pablo's preteen years, preventing any feeling of closeness from developing between Pablo and his stepfather.

During childhood, Pablo showed physical and emotional signs of distress. He experienced headaches, sleep problems, nightmares, and shyness. Pablo lied, fantasized, daydreamed; furthermore, he felt lonely, depressed, anxious, and afraid of adult men. At age 12 he began to use and deal drugs. His performance in school was poor.

Pablo's mother and father were strict. His parents were inflexible about Pablo's goals in life, and the arguments between the youth and his parents often involved these high expectations. Pablo dropped out of school and ran away from home.

Pablo describes himself as intelligent, popular, spontaneous, and trustworthy. At the same time, however, he reports feeling as if his life is a failure.

Identify some of the reasons why Pablo may have dropped out of school. Can you suggest some solutions to Pablo's situation without dropping out of school? What other ideas, resources, or choices may Pablo have?

SUPPLEMENT 6

Psychological and Sociological Factors Addressing Why Students Drop Out of School

- Students pushed out of school and let out of school
- Integrated schools in South have pushed blacks out of the schools (segregated schools offered support network, teachers knew families, and so on)
- Students don't have anyone to talk to
- Students lack skills—anxiety in failure
- Parents don't know how to provide support or an environment conducive to education (e.g., no quiet place to study at night)
- Ineffective testing (students are labeled and tracked by testing; students don't understand purpose of tests)
- Peer pressure and peer violence
- Drugs and alcohol
- Family problems
- Involvement with police, courts, criminal justice system—no cooperation with schools for education
- Racial conflicts; racial tension
- Financial problems (e.g., no money, clothes, shoes, etc.)
- Suspensions and expulsions
- Little value of high school diploma (college graduates are taking jobs high school graduates formerly held)
- Psychological problems
- Homicide
- Television
- Pregnancy
- Marriage

Source: *Staying in: A dropout prevention handbook K-12.* (1979). Madison: Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

SUPPLEMENT 7

Psychological Needs

Psychological needs related to self-esteem and what the learner can do to enhance each one.

IDENTITY—One needs to be noticed and recognized as special. This can be expressed in dress, walk, talk, word choices, hobbies, interests, and beliefs. Identity suffers when comparisons are made, feelings are rejected, and/or the person is ignored.

CONNECTEDNESS—One needs to be accepted by others, to belong, to be part of things, and to be included or wanted. Connectedness suffers when all things are done for individuals, when all activities must revolve around the teacher, and/or when ridicule is tolerated.

POWER—One needs to feel mighty, able to achieve or succeed, and to have self-control.

MEANING—One needs to feel the events in life add up to something, to find a reason for being, to accept ones self, to have hope for the future. Meaning suffers when the control in life is in other people's hands or when one is trapped.

VARIETY—One needs variety and positive changes in one's daily life. Variety suffers when the person is locked into the same pattern too long and when safety is valued over growth.

Adapted from: Chamberlain, V. M. (1992). *Creative home economics instruction* (3rd ed.) (p. 241). Peoria, IL: Glencoe.

The Confidence Game

It takes confidence to move ahead—but gaining more confidence is not as hard as you think. If you play the game, you might actually talk yourself into giving your ego a lift. Try these ten tips and surprise yourself with growing assurance.

1. **BUILD YOURSELF UP**
   Everyone has a positive side. Instead of worrying about what you can't do, think about your strengths. Make a list of your good points—all of them. Keep reminding yourself of the things you do well, the skills you have with people, machines, plants, your tennis game, your artistic side, or your organizational ability. Talk yourself up—not down.

2. **TALK POSITIVELY ABOUT YOURSELF**
   Modesty is all well and good, but if you keep saying "I'm clumsy," "I'm fat," or "I'm not good enough," you will begin to believe it—and so will others. Advertise your strengths.

3. **BUILD POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS**
   When you constantly apologize, you only sabotage yourself and raise doubts about your work. Don't hand in a project saying, "I know this could be better" or "I'm sorry this was not done sooner." Instead, build positive expectations by saying, "Here's the report. I've given it my best."

4. **SAY "I CAN"**
   Just because you have never been good at math, writing, or speaking to a group does not mean you can't learn. Adults, because they are more motivated, are often better at learning than when they were children. Give yourself a chance and you may be surprised at your potential.

5. **SOUND CONVINCING**
   Watch for conversational phrases like "I guess," "Maybe," "I suppose," or "I may be wrong, but . . ." Don't introduce statements with "Don't you think?" or make your statements sound like questions. If you don't sound convinced of what you are saying, how can anyone else be?

6. **SET GOALS**
   Think about where you would like to be in a year or in five years. Then write down the steps you must take to get there, and begin—one step at a time.

7. **TAKE ACTION TOWARD GOALS**
   Everyone is busy and it is easy to find excuses to put off signing up for a course or talking to your boss about ways to advance. Making a move, however small, toward your goal is the only way to get where you want to go. Energy generates more energy. Get moving!

8. **PLAY THE PART**
   Look at the way successful people dress and behave, and do the same yourself. Look people in the eye, shake hands firmly, speak distinctly, and dress well. No one can see inside to know if you are quaking. When you behave more confidently, you fool even yourself. Before you know it, you really will feel more confident.

9. **VOLUNTEER**
   When you have the chance to take on new responsibilities, don't say, "I'm not sure I can handle it." Try "I'm excited at the challenge" instead.

10. **DREAM**
    Fantasies are not a waste of time. Picture yourself the way you want to be; think about performing well and succeeding on the job. It can be a rehearsal for reality.

Source: Ohio Department of Education. (1989). *Family and career transition resource guide* (p. 65). Columbus: Division of Vocational and Career Education.

SUPPLEMENT 9

The Positive Approach

1. Take responsibility for your own life. Forget the cop-out of blaming your problems on your family or someone else. Only you can turn your life around.

2. Don't allow others to make you feel powerless. Refuse to accept the viewpoint that you are limited. You don't need everyone's approval to do something that is right for you.

3. Find a purpose in life. It can be rearing children, doing your best in business, or doing your best in whatever suits you. When the going gets rough, keep your sights on your purpose.

4. No matter what, make your relationship with your children work. If it's not working, ask yourself what you can do to make it work.

5. Exchange "I can't" for "I can" in your vocabulary. Seek your family's support. Ask them to help you say "I can do it."

6. Accept yourself as you are right now even though you may not like some things about yourself. After accepting yourself, plan to change what you dislike.

7. Create small, medium, and large goals. Every so often, check to see how you are meeting those goals. If you haven't met them, decide why.

8. Write down your new, positive beliefs about yourself and put them where you can see them. Repeat them to yourself as often as possible. You will soon begin to feel changes in the way you feel about yourself.

9. Step back and assess yourself regularly. A self-evaluation in the evening will help make the next day better.

10. Begin to see yourself as powerful, successful, and capable of reaching your goals. Picturing yourself reaching your goals will help you replace the old "I can't" image of yourself.

11. Be open to a possibility even if you've never done it and can't imagine how it could be done. Try a new plan even if it runs the risk of failure.

12. Work with a creative idea, plan, or project. Accept other ideas even though you didn't think of them, you won't get the credit, you won't personally benefit from them, or you may not live to see and enjoy them.

13. When you think you've reached the end of the rope, TIE A KNOT AND HANG ON!!!

Source: Ohio Department of Education. (1989). *Family and career transition resource guide* (p. 66). Columbus: Division of Vocational and Career Education.

I Am Me

In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me, but no one adds up exactly like me. Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose it.

I own everything about me:

my body, including everything it does
my mind, including all its thoughts and ideas
my eyes, including the images of all they behold
my feelings, whatever they may be—anger, joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement
my mouth, and all the words that come out of it—polite, sweet, or rough, correct or incorrect
my voice, loud or soft
all my actions, whether they be to others or to myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears.

I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. By so doing I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts. I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interests.

I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know. But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment in time is me. This is authentic and represents where I am at that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting. I can discard that which is unfitting, and keep that which proved fitting, and invent something new for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me, and therefore I can engineer me.

I AM ME AND I AM OKAY.

Source: Ohio Department of Education. (1989). *Family and career transition resource guide* (p. 67). Columbus: Division of Vocational and Career Education.

SUPPLEMENT 11

My Declaration of Self-Esteem

I, _____, invite myself to be so strong that nothing can disturb my peace of mind. To make all my friends feel that there is something special in them. To look at the sunny side of everything and make my optimism come true. I promise myself to think only of the best, to work only for the best, and expect only the best. To be about my own. I promise myself to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future. To be cheerful at all times and give every living creature I meet a smile. I promise myself to give so much time to the improvement of myself that I have no time to criticize others. To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

I give myself this invitation and promise to value my self-esteem on this day.

SUPPLEMENT 12

Characteristics of High and Low Self-Esteem

DIRECTIONS: Determine whether each of the following phrases is characteristic of high or of low self-esteem. Draw a line through the phrases that characterize *low* self-esteem.

Believes strongly in certain principles and values

Is overly sensitive to criticism

Is afraid to make a mistake

Is overly critical of others and self

Is capable of acting in own best judgment

Has few health problems

Blames others

Genuinely enjoys self and life

Participates in wide variety of activities

Feels equal to others as a person

Feels persecuted

Fears competition

Feels confident in ability to deal with challenging situations, despite failures and setbacks

Is reluctant to try new things

Is overresponsive to praise

Resists efforts of peers to dominate or sway

Is sensitive to needs of others

Is shy, timid, withdrawn

Is uncertain of own opinions and values

May be jealous and possessive

Is flexible, adaptable in changing situations

Cares about others

Has difficulty entering loving relationships

Is happy, energetic, enthusiastic

Enjoys life

Source: Ohio Department of Education. (1989). *Family and career transition resource guide* (p. 71). Columbus: Division of Vocational and Career Education.

SUPPLEMENT 13

Understanding That Other People Have Feelings Too

Read about the following people. Which of the three feelings describes the person's feeling best? Underline that word.

1. How would most mothers feel if their 15-year-old came home 6 hours late?
   (happy, worried, thrilled)

2. When a worker does not show up for work, how may the boss feel?
   (guilty, angry, bored)

3. You shovel the sidewalk for an elderly lady who can hardly walk. How does the elderly lady feel toward you?
   (sad, confused, grateful)

4. All the girls in dance club are always talking and laughing, that is, everyone except the new girl, Marcie. How does Marcie feel?
   (lonely, proud, guilty)

5. When Mrs. Smith had a birthday, the neighborhood kids had 6 red roses delivered to her house. How did she feel?
   (childish, trapped, overjoyed)

6. When all the kids in class will not quiet down even when told several times, how does the teacher feel?
   (frustrated, free, bored)

7. The corner of Amy's coat was hanging outside her locker. Someone pulled on it and tore the coat in shreds. How does Amy feel?
   (lonely, guilty, angry)

8. When Thomas won his first swimming medal, how did he feel?
   (proud, selfish, lonely)

9. Marty asked the boss for a night off so he could go to the basketball game. Even though he could not find a substitute, he insisted on going. The boss had to find the sub. How did the boss feel?
   (disappointed, happy, afraid)

10. How should Marty feel since he went to the game when the boss did not want him to go?
    (disgusted, guilty, afraid)

11. You decide to go with a friend instead of walking Billy, your five-year-old nephew, home. How might Billy feel since it is 10 p.m. and he is not sure where his house is?
(afraid, guilty, cruel)

12. You take time each day to visit with each of the members of your family about something other than problems. How does it make them feel?
(trapped, playful, pleased)

13. Outside the roads have ice an inch thick. The temperature is 10 below. A mother's three teenage children are on the way home. The telephone lines are out and so is the electricity. How does the mother feel?
(needed, fearful, childish).

14. Jim Cooper who was the school custodian has been in a hospital many months now. The town collected many thousands of dollars to help pay for his hospital bills. The children at the school where he worked have planted 200 different trees in the area that will be called Cooper City Park. What is the feeling Jim gets from the whole town?
(guilt, impatience, love)

15. Lee wants to be a mechanic but the only school for mechanics is 50 miles away. He does not have the money for tuition nor room and board. The only job he can get without training is pumping gas. What feeling does Lee have deep inside?
(fear, guilt, frustration)

Source: Illinois State Board of Education. (1972). *An individualized program for early school leavers: Twenty individualized modules centering around the world of work.* Macomb: Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse.

SUPPLEMENT 14A

If the Shoe Fits . . .

Vote for your favorite shoe and find out what you are like as a person:

Tennis Shoe: comfortable, practical person who gets things done—versatile, fits in most places—likes sports—usually has an active hobby—flexible and adaptable—helps out when needed—likes people—friendly.

Work Boot or Hiking Boot: hard worker—can take getting dirty or meeting a challenge—ready to get going—sometimes impatient—doesn't like to sit around in meetings—will do the unpleasant job if it needs to be done—usually can do many things.

Dress Shoe: can rise to special occasion and be a leader—will step out in front but knows when to be a follower—careful, good manager, dependable, gets the job done in a quiet manner—may speak out if disagrees.

Sandal: carefree, friendly—may be late but makes up for it by being enthusiastic—likes nature—knows how to relax and when to relax—hurries up to get the job done in order to do other things—calls on tennis shoe or work boot for help—has a good time—open to new ideas.

Loafer or Moccasin: cool, calm, comfortable—does the job and then pursues own interests—copes well in stressful situations—practical person—enjoys the opposite sex.

Earth or Nature Shoe: a little different—creative, arty—doesn't always know what day it is—tries out new ideas—has special talents but may not relate to others at times—likes funky things—can really produce when motivated.

Barefoot: nature person—enjoys the physical aspects of life like eating and sleeping.

If the Shoe Fits . . . Facilitator Notes

1. Shoes come in all different sizes, shapes, and colors. People also come in different sizes, shapes, and colors. We need all types of people just like we need different kinds of shoes.

2. People choose different shoes as their favorite. We do not all select the same type of shoe because we are different. We are all unique individuals and should respect other people's choices and decisions.

3. Although most of us have a favorite shoe, we may need to try on a new shoe. New shoes may pinch or feel uncomfortable, but sometimes we need to be willing to try on a new shoe. This is also true of ideas. Sometimes we need to try out an idea—even if it hurts a little.

4. We need to stand up for what we believe and step out in front. We need to know when to be a leader and when to be a follower. If we do not do what needs to be done, then we should not kick about what happens.

5. If the shoe fits, wear it.

Source: Workshop handout developed by Drs. Violet Moore and Delbert Hayden, Department of Economics and Family Living, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green.

SUPPLEMENT 15

I Am Lovable and Capable (IALAC)

Facilitator Guidelines

The "I Am Lovable and Capable" (IALAC) story is told to illustrate how one's self-concept can be destroyed by others. If told with feeling and imagination, the story can create a very powerful and moving experience.

Take a sheet of paper and write the letters IALAC (pronounced I-ah-lack) on it in large bold print. Holding this to your chest so that people in the group around you can see it, tell them, "Everyone carries an invisible IALAC sign around with them at all times and wherever they go. IALAC stands for 'I am lovable and capable.' This is our self-concept, or how we feel about ourselves. The size of our sign, or how good we feel about ourselves, is often affected by how others interact with us. If somebody is nasty to us, teases us, puts us down, rejects us, or hits us, then a piece of our IALAC sign is destroyed. [Illustrate this by tearing a corner piece off the sign.] I am going to tell you a story to illustrate how this happens in everyday life." Then proceed to tell the people about a person who is the same age they are. Pick a name that no one in the group has. As you tell the story, try to be emotional and dramatic. An outline is provided below. You will have to fill it in with your own imagination. Some teachers have the group help create the story as they go along. As you describe each event that negatively affects the person's IALAC sign, tear another piece of the sign off until, at the end, you are left with almost nothing.

A possible outline for the IALAC story follows. Feel free to adapt, add to, or embellish it in any way you want.

Carol is still lying in bed ten minutes after her alarm has gone off. All of a sudden the snooze alarm goes off, and she says to herself, "Carol, you lazybones, get your body out of bed and get ready for work!" (rip!) Carol gets out of bed, goes to get dressed, and can't find a clean blouse. (rip!) She goes to brush her teeth and her daughter, who's already locked herself in the bathroom, tells Carol it'll be ten more minutes before she's finished! (rip!) She goes to breakfast to find that her son ate the last of the cereal. (rip!) Then her daughter comes to breakfast and yells at Carol, "Why can't you ever get any food? All my other friends' mothers find time to go to the grocery store and fix nice meals. I wish I lived with one of my friends!" (rip!) Then her son comes in the room, blaming Carol for not having washed his soccer uniform for the school pictures being taken today. (rip!) As Carol leaves for work, she forgets her lunch. (rip!) When she gets to the corner she sees the bus pull away so she has to walk to another bus stop five blocks away. (rip!) She's late to work and must report to the supervisor, who gives her a lecture. (rip!)

Continue the story through the day with appropriate examples. Some possibilities are as follow:

Forgetting a book borrowed from a friend
Being yelled at by an irate customer
Breaking the washing machine
Not knowing answers for the children's homework
Dropping a tray of food in the cafeteria
Burning supper
Eating lunch alone
Forgetting a meeting
Making a mistake
Redoing a report

End the story by showing Carol going to bed with an IALAC sign about as big as a quarter!

Source: Ohio Department of Education. (1989). *Family and career transition resource guide* (p. 71). Columbus: Division of Vocational and Career Education.

SUPPLEMENT 16

Goal Setting

Goal setting is a way to get things to change oneself, to become the person you truly want to be. It works like this:

- You select a goal you want to reach.
- Choice: You decide on which path to take to get there.
- You act—achieving your goal—and carry through to other goals.
- You experience the satisfaction of completing a personal goal.
- This enforces the process and encourages you to set another, higher goal.
- You act—you achieve this goal and move to an even higher success.
- The cycle continues upward to a greater degree of satisfaction and fulfillment—higher, further, faster, better, but built on each progressive success.

Guidelines for Setting Goals

Guidelines should be . . .

Conceivable: capable of being put into words

Believable: acceptable as appropriate to my values

Achievable: can be accomplished with my present strengths

Controllable: does not depend on a specific response from another person in order to achieve it

Measurable: I can observe it; I can count it; I can weigh it

Desirable: something I *really* want to do

Stated with No Alternatives: not optional, achieved one step at a time

Growth Facilitating: not injurious to self, others, or society

Source: *Colorado core home economics curriculum guides* (p. LM-III-B-I). (1991). Fort Collins: Colorado State University, Vocational Home Economics.

SUPPLEMENT 17

Resource Guide to Dropout Sources and Agencies

Parental Assistance and Involvement

The ASPIRA Association, Inc.
1112 16th Street, NW, Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 835-3600

National Center for Parents in Dropout Prevention
National Committee for Citizens in Education
10840 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 301
Columbia, MD 21044
(800) 638-9675

Home and School Institute
Special Projects Office
1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202)466-3633

Institute for Responsive Education
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3309

Quality Early Childhood Education

Children's Defense Fund
122C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation
600 N. River Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-2898
(313) 485-2000

National Association for Education of Young Children
1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(800) 424-2460

Parents as Teachers National Center
8001 Natural Bridge
Marillac Hall
St. Louis, MO 63121-4499
(314) 553-5738

The National Center for Family Literacy
1 Riverfront Plaza, Suite 608
Louisville, KY 40202
(502) 584-1133

Mentoring and Tutoring

Campus Compact
Box 1975
Brown University
Providence, RI 02912
(401) 863-1119

Inter-Cultural Development Research Association (IDRA)
5853 Callaghan Road, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78228
(512) 684-8180

The International Centre for Mentoring
Suite 510, 1200 W. Pender Street
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6E 2S9
(604) 684-4134

Career Beginnings Program Center for Human Resources
The Heller School, Brandeis University
P.O. Box 9110
Waltham, MA 02254-9110
(617) 736-3770

National Mentor Contact Network
4802 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 622-1320

Workforce Readiness and Career Counseling

Center on Education and Training Employment
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-4815

National Center for Research in Vocational Education
University of California at Berkeley
2150 Shattuck, Suite 1250
Berkeley, CA 94794
(415) 642-4004

Summer Enhancement Programs

STEP Program
Public/Private Ventures
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Part II: Introduction to Homeless

What Does It Mean To Be Homeless?
Homelessness, broadly defined, means lack of a fixed residence. This includes those people whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter, an emergency housing placement (such as the motels or hotels used by local welfare agencies), or an abandoned building; or people who live in streets, parks, transportation terminals, automobiles, or campgrounds. Less apparent are the "invisible" homeless, those who move from one setting to another, double up with friends and family, or those who use emergency lodging on occasions.

Being homeless means more than not having a secure place to sleep. Being homeless means having no place to store the things that connect you to your past; losing contact with friends and family; uprooting your kids from school; and having to endure the shame of what is still perceived as personal failure. For some, being homeless means breaking up the family to find lodging for the night, since many "family shelters" do not allow older boys to stay, and many homeless children are placed with relatives or put into foster care. Being homeless means enduring the routine indignities of living on the margins, the frustration of not being able to provide for those who depend on you, the humiliation of having to rely on the kindness of strangers, the anonymity of government assistance. Being homeless means having no center in one's life, no haven to return to, no certainty about tomorrow.

How Many Homeless People Are There?
The unfortunate fact is that nobody knows how many homeless people there are. The National Coalition for the Homeless estimates there are at least 3 million homeless people in the United States (February 1991). Not all of them are on the streets or in shelters. Some are staying with friends or relatives, often in overcrowded conditions. Others, particularly in rural areas, are living in something less than housing—shacks or chicken coops, open to the elements and without plumbing or safe ways of heating or cooking.

Families constitute one-third of the nation's homeless population, and 100,000 youth are among the homeless (Vail, 1992).

What Are the Characteristics?
Certain characteristics have been identified as more prevalent among the homeless than in the general population. The homeless can be placed into three broad categories: those with chronic disabilities, those who have experienced personal crises, and those who have been affected by adverse economic conditions (Berger & Tremblay, 1989).

Chronic Disabilities—those homeless who are substance (alcohol or drug) abusers or who are mentally ill. Approximately 35% of the homeless are substance abusers, and 23% are mentally ill. Across the nation, about 50% of persons using emergency shelters have a chronic disability, and a large percentage of street people also may fall into this category. This group can be considered the chronic homeless, and solutions for their situation will be difficult to develop (Berger & Tremblay, 1989).

Personal Crisis—those homeless people who have experienced crises such as divorce, domestic violence, or eviction are often only temporarily homeless, unless they are alone without knowledge of how and where to find a support system. Those who lack family ties, close friends, or affiliation with a religious or other local organization may find that their isolation transforms a temporary crisis into a prolonged situation (Berger & Tremblay, 1989).

Economic Conditions affect the third group of homeless people. These people are usually temporarily homeless. These conditions are frequently byproducts of personal crisis and are related to poverty, unemployment, a shortage of unskilled or of full-time jobs, low wages, and not enough human resources to get or keep employment (Berger & Tremblay, 1989).

The average American used to equate homelessness with drunks on skid row. Now it is plain that a whole range of people in society have no place to live.

Who Are They?
Runaway, Dropout, Throwaway Youth make up another segment of the total homeless population. Estimates are that one million youth under the age of 18 run away from home each year and, for as many as half, this is a chronic pattern (Hersch, 1988). Approximately 500,000 of these adolescents are involved in illegal activities such as drug abuse and trafficking, prostitution and/or solicitation, and other street crimes (Axelson & Dail, 1988). Homelessness and the violence of the streets are more attractive than remaining in a family

setting characterized by alcoholic parents; deprivation; neglect; and physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Throwaways are children whose parents have essentially discarded them, usually because of divorce and economic stress.

Working Poor are individuals (both men and women) who are employed, but do not earn a wage that guarantees their economic self-sufficiency. These men and women work at low- or minimum-wage jobs in cities where rental costs, even at the lowest levels, are beyond their ability to pay (Axelson & Dail, 1988).

Mentally Dysfunctional or Substance Abusers consist of as many as 25% of the homeless and another third are substance abusers at the time they become homeless.

Interpersonal Crisis homeless are those who have experienced some combination of economic, social, and/or personal crisis that have led to their social and physical isolation and eventual homelessness. These individuals are from all social strata, but the tendency is for homelessness to be more common among lower socioeconomic groups.

Homeless Women/Families are usually headed by a female who is a single parent. Approximately 50% of women heading homeless families are between the ages of 17 and 25 and are about equally distributed among African American and white populations. Approximately 10% report being married; the remaining have never married, are separated, divorced, or widowed. Ninety percent will become social system dependents (Aid to Families with Dependent Children [AFDC], on food stamps, and/or Medicaid) as a result of losing their place of residence. Their employment is sporadic, but almost 75% report having been employed at a regular job for a sustained period sometime in the past. The lack of family and social or emotional support is notable. Most of the women report having no emotional or family support available to them (Axelson & Dail, 1988).

Nearly half of *Homeless Children* are under 5 years of age; 12% are between 12 and 17 years of age. Among children under 5 years of age, there is a marked tendency toward low birth weight and manifestations of drug-related illnesses that were incurred during the prenatal period (Fagen, 1987). Malnutrition, severe stomach disorders, and poor weight gain and physical development also occur. These children exhibit delayed social and emotional development which causes aggression, withdrawal, and demanding behaviors. There is a tendency toward sleep disorders, abnormal social fear, poor physical coordination, and speech difficulties. In the school age population, 50%-66% of the children need psychiatric assistance. These children have symptoms of depression that include high levels of anxiety and suicidal tendencies. School performance is consistently below average due to irregular attendance and chaotic personal lives (Dail, 1988).

Because of their mothers' circumstances—which severely impair their ability to parent—homeless children are subject to both physical and emotional abuse and lack opportunities to develop the needed interpersonal and social skills that can ensure their overall social and emotional development and survival. These children exhibit a diminished sense of self and of their future (Dail, 1988).

Retired/Disabled/Elderly - Retired men/women on tiny fixed incomes.

Unemployed/Out-of-Work Unskilled and Skilled Laborers - Unemployed people who have been laid off from jobs and who have not retrained for new jobs. Most are lost in the system.

Veterans Who Served Our Nation - After serving our nation in times of war or distress, these people have become dysfunctional in society and have no place to live or go, thus becoming homeless.

Explain the Circumstances Which Contribute to Homelessness.

Learner Outcomes

- Identify some causes of homelessness.
- Identify some danger signals that lead to homelessness.

Definitions

deinstitutionalization - persons discharged from mental hospitals or correctional facilities with no out-patient facilities awaiting them

homelessness - lack of a fixed residence

Key Ideas

The leading cause of contemporary homelessness is the lack of affordable housing. It is estimated that there are two low-income families for every affordable unit. Those who are without homes are the poor, the sick and the disabled, and single parents with young children. As the shortage worsens, the newly homeless have begun to include senior citizens on fixed incomes and low-wage working people.

An economic factor that contributes to homelessness is the large increase in the number of people living in poverty. Every month 821 American children die from poverty. Children are the poorest Americans. One in five, a total of more than 12 million children, are poor (*The State of America's Children*, 1991).

The consistently high rate of structural unemployment and underemployment is considered to be another economic factor that adds to the ranks of the nation's homeless.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 69% of the new jobs expected between 1988 and 2000 will be in retail trade and services. By the year 2000, close to half the jobs in this country will pay less than the amount needed to rent suitable housing (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1991). Full-time employment may not generate the income needed to afford rent.

Another cause relating to homelessness is that many people are unable to find a job if they cannot give a permanent address or telephone number. Single parents who head their families and need to work cannot do so unless they have access to day care or their children are enrolled in school. Children lacking a permanent address have difficulty registering for school and often move around too much to maintain attendance even if they are registered. Estimates of the numbers of homeless children that do not regularly attend school range from 28% to 43%. Without an education or stable family life, the cycle of homelessness and poverty is likely to continue (Berger & Tremblay, 1989).

Another factor that contributes to homelessness is inadequate mental and physical health care. Uninsured families may have been forced to deplete savings due to serious physical injury and illness. AIDS is fast becoming a cause of homelessness.

While some families become homeless because of an eviction or job loss, most homelessness is caused by an interpersonal crisis. The nature of this crisis varies, but seems to focus upon four areas of concern:

1. Most homeless women report a relationship with a male that dissolves for a reason associated with physical violence or abuse problems. Frequently it is a violent incident that suddenly causes the women to take their children and leave, thus making them homeless.

2. Many homeless women report major disruptions early in their family life, including an absent or unknown father, parental death, mental illness or alcoholism of parent(s), physical abuse, and/or a violent family environment that has created a diminished childhood experience. These circumstances explain the general lack of extended family support at the time of crisis.

3. Mental illness (usually depression, not the schizophrenia commonly seen

Strategies/Methods

among the deinstitutionalized) and substance abuse characterize at least one fourth of this population. Mothers are stressed and are facing problems of single parenting under the difficult circumstances of poverty, lack of extended family support, lack of affordable child care, and being without a home.

4. Families report moving an average of 6.6 times in the five years before becoming homeless. Often they have doubled up with others for short periods or used emergency shelters often. The tendency has been to move from place to place because of some combination of personal crisis, eviction for nonpayment of rent, demolition of the dwelling, and/or job loss (Axelson & Dail, 1988).

Some danger signals that can lead to homelessness include doubling up with family and friends, the underhoused (living in substandard conditions), depletion of savings, continuing previous lifestyle, financial support from family and friends, unhealthy relationships, bad decisions, and a high activity of moving.

1. The facilitator might dress as a bag lady or homeless person when teaching the first session. Consider attitudes, behaviors, and comments from the learners. Do they respect you as a facilitator? Were they courteous to you? Would they give you a job if they could? Discuss with the learners their feelings and attitudes. Ask them to put themselves in a similar situation.

2. The facilitator might ask the learners if they have heard someone complain that the poor do not work because they are lazy? Name some uncontrollable reasons for unemployment? (e.g., pink slip, lay off).

3. The facilitator may introduce a discussion of the housing problem for low-income families by displaying pictures of low cost housing of various types. Invite a landlord, tenant, builder, public housing official, and mortgage loan officer to discuss the need for low-income housing. Supplement 1, "Housing Crises," has been provided to discuss problems of low-income housing.

4. Frequently women experience a violent incident(s) that causes them and their children to leave their homes, thus making them homeless. The facilitator may wish to review Supplement 2, "Interpersonal Crisis: Spouse/ Partner Abuse," and use it to stress awareness and danger signals of an unhealthy relationship.

5. To help learners recognize that personal financial problems may be a danger signal to becoming homeless, the facilitator could discuss with learners possible danger signals of being financially overextended. Signals may include the following:

   - Paying your bills later and later each month.
   - Depending upon "extra" earnings to cover monthly bills.
   - Borrowing to pay existing bills.
   - Charging more and more items.
   - Using savings to pay current bills.
   - Unable to save.
   - Pay interest due on bills but rarely on principal.
   - Never pay the full amount of the bill.

6. Supplement 3, "Danger Signals of Becoming Homeless," may be used to discuss a number of danger signals that could lead to homelessness. Encourage learners to react to the situations and suggest solutions or preventive measures.

7. The facilitator may wish to read to the learners a comment from a homeless seven-year old about her family:

   "Daddy used to pick stuff—any fruit or vegetables—and Ma and Juan (her three-year-old brother) and me took our car and came up north. Ma said she had relatives up here, but we couldn't find them. We stayed in the car until it wouldn't go no more. We didn't have no money, see?"

Suggested Activities

Ask the learners to identify causes of homelessness for the child and her family. Discuss with the learner the causes and suggest alternatives for the family.

Causes: lack of affordable housing, few suitable paying jobs for father, leaving of father, no family support from relatives, no money.

8. Define deinstitutionalization. Discuss the effects that it might have on communities. A resource person from a mental health facility or correctional site could be invited to address the problems that exist when persons are discharged from hospitals and prisons with inadequate or nonexistent plans.

1. Have learners brainstorm a list of causes of homelessness. The list might include the following:

   - lack of affordable housing
   - unemployment
   - underemployment
   - lack of health care
   - job loss
   - eviction

2. Using Supplement 3, "Danger Signals of Becoming Homeless," have learners read and react to the potential danger signals that may contribute to homelessness. Have learners add any other danger signals to the list.

3. It may be helpful for learners to estimate the amount of debt that can be handled according to income. If appropriate, learners could estimate yearly or monthly income and subtract all expenses, debts, and bills from that income. If debts exceed income, discuss the danger signals of personal financial problems. Discuss how they might be resolved. An alternative could be a fictitious but realistic example.

4. If appropriate, have learner choose one of the obstacles listed in Supplement 2 "Interpersonal Crisis: Spouse/Partner Abuse," on why abuse victims remain in an abusive relationship. Discuss with learners precautions and possible feelings of fear when dealing with an unhealthy relationship.

   An alternate activity may include a resource person from an area health or crisis agency to discuss spouse/partner abuse.

Identify Problems Resulting from Homelessness and Ways These Might be Resolved.

Learner Outcomes

- Understand how lack of a permanent home affects the quality of life for individuals, mothers, children, and families.
- Develop an awareness of the stressful and difficult living arrangements that shelters can create for the homeless.
- Identify some problems resulting from being forced to live on the streets.

Definitions

homelessness	- broadly defined, means lack of a fixed residence
poverty	- anyone living with an annual cash income below the government's official poverty level
precariously housed	- spending the night in doubled up shared housing with friends or relatives
street people	- those who sleep in the open or in public spaces
shelter people	- those who use a shelter at any time
resource people	- those staying with friends and family or in a low cost hotel/motel
working poor	- people who do not earn enough money to afford housing but earn too much to meet heightened eligibility requirements for public assistance

Key Ideas

By definition, the homeless lack shelter. Without shelter, homeless persons have no place in which to conduct the daily activities necessary to function as self-sufficient members of society or in which to find protection from the elements or criminals.

Without an address, the homeless find it difficult to secure a job or get welfare benefits. With no permanent address, employers are reluctant to hire the homeless. With no permanent address, the homeless have no place to keep their possessions.

Presently, the shelter system encompasses a complex of facilities and services available to homeless people. These include emergency shelters, transitional housing, hotels, motels, trailer parks, drop-in centers, soup kitchens, food pantries, and breadlines (Boxhill, 1987).

Problems With the Shelter Systems

Many shelters do not provide facilities for families, therefore families are forced to break up, abandon their children, or turn them over to foster care. Some shelters will not accept husbands/fathers or older male children into the facility. Thus, those families that do have an adult male present will likely be separated from him if they seek public shelter. The forced absences of a significant family member further reduce opportunities for natural human connections when emotional support and physical nearness would be helpful, if not necessary.

The hours that a person can spend in a shelter are limited. Often homeless people are required to leave the shelter during the day, as early as 5:30 in the morning. The maximum length of time a person can be lodged in a shelter may range from one night to over a year. Time restrictions such as these can contribute to the destabilization and stress experienced by homeless people (Rivlin & Imbimbo, 1989).

Shelterization goes beyond the adaptation to the shelters. It includes the loss of personal responsibility for getting out of the shelter, loss of a sense of ties, avoidance of friends and family, and loss of ambition, pride, self-respect, and confidence.

Many facilities used as emergency shelters for homeless families are located in dangerous neighborhoods where criminal activity is commonplace.

Often families are crowded into one room without a kitchen or private bathroom. From waking to sleeping, mothers and their children live in shared spaces. Family units which have previously enjoyed the freedom to express love, caring, frustration, anger, and all other emotions in their own homes are now forced to express their feelings in communal settings, subject themselves to prevailing shelter rules for communal living, stifle their strongest and deepest feelings, expose their personal style of "mothering" to strangers, capitulate to peer pressure, and catch glimpses of who they appear to be in the eyes of onlookers (Rivlin & Imbimbo, 1989).

There may be no outdoor space for children to play. Since these shelters house chronic substance abusers, petty criminals and/or prostitutes, this is a frightening environment for a family with children, and indeed, if employment were available to these mothers, it would not be safe for them to leave their children alone, even for short periods, to go to a job.

Hunger and poor nutrition is prevalent. Obtaining food by visiting an organized source such as a soup kitchen or by scavenging throughout a neighborhood does not provide adequate nutrition.

Poor physical health is often a byproduct of time spent on the streets. The exposure to extreme cold, inadequate clothing, poor nutrition, limited opportunities to bathe, possible contact with persons with contagious illnesses, and problems in obtaining needed medical care contribute to a high incidence of poor health (Berger & Tremblay, 1988). The homeless often have symptoms of hypothermia, parasitic infestations, degenerative joint diseases, and vascular and skin disorders of the feet and legs (*Homelessness, Health, and Human Needs*, 1988).

A street environment makes the homeless easy targets of victimization. Persons who are malnourished or under the influence of alcohol or drugs may lack the physical resources to protect themselves.

Over time, the growth and development of homeless individuals can be stunted. Homeless pregnant women often receive little or no prenatal care. Infants are at risk of being delivered prematurely. Homeless, school-age children have difficulty keeping up with their peers when schooling is frequently interrupted or occurs in various locations. These conditions may lead to low self-esteem and limited skills and knowledge for coping successfully in American society throughout life.

The combined effects of poverty, violence, and deprivation on a person's self-esteem have contributed to the cycle of continuing poverty, family breakdowns, and more recently family homelessness. Poverty alone erodes a person's confidence and creates feelings of despair and alienation. When poverty is coupled with other factors such as the lack of early nurturing by a mothering figure, childhood abuse, and living in unstable situations during one's formative years, the effects are especially damaging.

There are also those who may become mentally ill as a result of being homeless over a long period of time. Children younger than five have shown signs of severe and perhaps lifelong emotional, social, and cognitive problems.

Strategies/Methods

1. The facilitator can determine if learners are aware of homeless people and people living in poverty by asking some simple questions:

   - Are there hungry people in the United States?
   - Are there hungry people in your community?
   - Where are they located?

   The facilitator may wish to use a city, county, and the United States map to pinpoint areas where students think poverty exists.

2. Using Supplement 4, "Defining Poverty," as an overhead, the facilitator could discuss with the learners their own definition of poverty. Discuss differences in how learners' perceive poverty.

3. The facilitator might suggest role playing using an American mother telling a child "Now, Honey, finish your dinner, think of all the people starving in Africa." Ask learners to discuss the stigmatism associated with the homeless. Do American people deny the fact there are homeless and starving people in America?

4. To help learners recognize problems resulting from being forced to live on the streets, the facilitator may wish to emphasize how the growth and development of homeless individuals can be stunted (see "Key Ideas"). Discuss the difficulty homeless children may have in school. Ask learners to list other problems resulting from living on the streets.

5. The facilitator might discuss with the learners some solutions to some of the problems (e.g., not being able to leave children in shelters during the day because of safety reasons could hinder the homeless person from getting and keeping a job; no child care; unsafe shelters) in homeless situations.

6. The facilitator and learners might sponsor a community drive to raise money for the homeless. Families could camp in tents in the cold weather to get an understanding of how the homeless have to live on the streets.

Suggested Activities

1. After learners have created a definition for poverty (Supplement 4), have learners complete Supplement 5, "What Does It Mean To Be Poor." Discuss questions. Determine if any learners want to change their definition of poverty.

2. In a group setting, have learners brainstorm a way to devise a carry all for everything one owns or needs for personal survival. (This activity is intended to make learners see what it would mean to have no permanent home to keep one's private possessions, and to carry all of one's possessions night and day.)

3. Using Supplement 6, "No Permanent Address," as an idea starter, have learners make a list of the problems that might occur as a result of no permanent address. For example: one cannot receive welfare checks; cannot enroll children in school.

4. Have learners divide into groups. Discuss the effects that living in a shelter with no privacy or place to keep private possessions could have on behavior toward one another and other people. Discuss how a homeless family might maintain privacy and the feelings of a home. How would stressful living in a shelter affect each member of the family? Have the group report their discussions and possible solutions to the class.

5. Have learners brainstorm a list of effects from being forced to live on the streets. These might include the effect on health from extreme heat and cold, inadequate clothing, poor nutrition, limited opportunities to bathe, possible contact with persons with contagious illnesses, and problems in obtaining medical care (e.g., limited opportunities to bathe may cause cases of lice, infections, skin disorders, and so on).

6. Have learners role play a situation that a homeless person may encounter in shelters. For example: being mugged of food donated by a passerby. Encourage the learner to offer solutions and precautions that could be effective for defending oneself. For example: person being mugged of food may offer to share food, hide the food in an inconspicuous place until safe to eat, or other suggested methods of defense.

COMPETENCY THREE

Describe Ways In Which Homeless Persons May Seek To Satisfy Their Human Needs.

Learner Outcomes

- Relate some creative and resourceful means that homeless people use to meet their needs for food, clothing, and shelter.
- Identify some survival strategies utilized by homeless persons in meeting their physical, social, and psychological needs.

Key Ideas

If one's needs are inadequately satisfied (too many frustrations), or there has been a deprivation of love, one can become disordered, anxious, tense, fearful, and hostile.

Survival strategies that the homeless employ include self-help communities, found spaces, and creative resourcefulness.

Definitions

empties	- a type of shelter that homeless persons find; for example, an abandoned or empty building
found spaces	- another type of shelter that homeless persons find are locations that they can spend their days without being threatened or harassed (invisible or visible locations)
human needs	- an urge or drive of the organism which must be satisfied if the organism or the group is to survive
physical	- meeting needs of the body
psychological	- dealing with the mind and with mental and emotional processes
self-help community	- an empty, city-owned lot, a found space, transformed into housing by a group of homeless persons
social	- having to do with human beings in their living together

Strategies/Methods

1. To increase learners' ability to assess and handle difficult situations, the following method focuses on personal safety, how to defend oneself, demonstrating physical self-defense techniques and encouraging daily exercise for physical fitness.

   - Discuss or role play with learners the different types of dangerous situations and how best to handle them. Ask learners to name places that might be dangerous; discuss how they can try to judge whether they are being followed or whether a person is likely to accost them. Urge them to trust their instincts whenever they find a situation uncomfortable. Emphasize it is always best to avoid a potentially dangerous situation.

   - Invite someone who teaches self-defense to explain and demonstrate basic techniques. Have learners practice these techniques.

2. Using Supplement 7, "The Affordable Home," as an overhead, discuss with learners the meaning of the cartoon. Try to make the following points:

   - There are problems with availability of low income housing.

   - The homeless person needs to be resourceful in satisfying personal needs such as using the refrigerator box for shelter.

   Encourage learners to comment on their thoughts and the effect the cartoon has on them.

3. The facilitator may increase the learners awareness of survival strategies of the homeless by reading and discussing Supplement 8, "Found Spaces." Point out self-help communities and found spaces are resourceful techniques used by the homeless to provide for shelter and their human needs.

4. The facilitator might ask the learners to make a list of places where homeless people might congregate in their area. For example, a homeless woman that sleeps in her car may go to Wal-Mart during the day to spend her time at the refreshment center, she may go to the rest room and brush her teeth, or bathe. In a public place she is not considered a threat to the community. Let learners brainstorm on some resourcefulness that the homeless may resort to to satisfy personal needs.

Suggested Activities

1. Have learners read Supplement 9, "Short Story: Being Homeless." Divide into small groups and have learners list the thoughts and creative ways the character satisfied his human needs: psychological, physical, and social.

2. Using Supplement 10, "Objects of Resourcefulness," have the learners divide into groups and brainstorm different ways each object could be used to help satisfy a homeless person's needs. The object may satisfy many different needs, including physical (food, clothing, shelter), social, or psychological. Ask for suggestions of other items that could have been included on the list of items not provided in the supplement.

3. Suggest learners bring in a picture of a homeless person from a magazine or newspaper. Ask the learner to react to the picture, person, and or belongings. Ask them to comment on their thoughts and feelings toward this person. What kind of values may this person have? What may have caused homelessness?

Determine Available Sources of Help for Individuals and Families Facing Homelessness.

Learner Outcomes

- Develop an awareness of how one can act effectively as a citizen and as a caring member of society concerning the homeless.
- List ways to help the homeless build an independent and self-sufficient way of life.
- Identify the available resources and programs available to help the homeless.

Definitions

advocate - one who pleads another's cause or in support of something

coalition - a union or member for a common cause (e.g., the homeless)

Key Ideas

Since becoming a homeless family involves more than one causal factor, it is important to avoid focusing on the victim.

Since many of the predictors of homelessness tend to center on family-related experiences, the family should be one important and critical focus of attention when considering solutions to this complex social problem.

Ways suggested to work to solve the deeper problem of homelessness include recognizing the problems of our socioeconomic system and confronting them, tax structure, social insurance for the elderly, construct affordable housing, institute a high-quality health care (physical, mental, and behavioral) for those of the poor who need it, and establish a minimum living wage, not a minimal wage. For those who cannot work, guarantee an income sufficiently above the poverty level, above the level now set, which is well below the poverty level (Bassuk, Lauriat, & Rubin, 1987).

No single approach can adequately address all of the housing needs of low-income families. A housing assistance program has been suggested to enable low-income people to obtain decent housing at costs that they can afford.

Public policy which focuses upon families must directly reflect the unique needs of the single parent—female-headed households—the most common structure of the homeless family. Changes should include a qualitative and quantitative supply of emergency shelters for women (and families) that are accessible, have simple admission procedures, and have special provisions for children. Community efforts to develop transitional and permanent housing and vocational training should be undertaken and supported. Departments of mental health and mental retardation should expand their outreach efforts to those who are eligible to receive AFDC, Supplemental Security Income, and Disability benefits. Agencies should redirect some of their programs to specifically meet the needs of homeless women and children. Cities and states could be encouraged to build or convert facilities so that there are adequate supplies of transitional and permanent, affordable housing, and the public assistance allowance should be raised to reflect inflation and rising minimum rent costs (Axelson & Dail, 1988).

Child care for the homeless family is dependent upon public assistance. Without child care, mothers cannot work and will not be able to secure housing, particularly in places where the housing allowance from public welfare does not equal the minimum rental costs for the area.

The homeless need help in order to build an independent and self-sufficient way of life. It is suggested that day centers be established in cities with high homeless populations. Day centers would provide a place for the homeless to go during the day and would help them meet their basic needs while taking steps toward self-sufficiency. The day centers would not be responsible for sheltering the homeless but would actively engage

Strategies/Methods

in referral activities and shelter placement. Showers and bathrooms, laundry facilities, local service telephones, transportation to job interviews, and clothing would be available at the day centers. Local telephone service could enable contact with potential employers. Homeless people entering the day center would be classified by stages of need, with self-sufficiency as the overall goal. In the "crisis" stage, an individual or family would be given priority if faced with a life-threatening situation. Food, temporary housing, and medical or any other assistance would be provided to save lives. In the "stabilization" stage, assistance in finding a job or obtaining housing or food would be provided. In the "relocation" stage, assistance in finding permanent housing would be available. In the "follow-up" stage, an individual or family would be visited at home to determine stability and need for other public assistance (Hawks, 1989).

By assisting the homeless to become independent and self-sufficient, there not only is a greater possibility of improving their quality of life, but also a greater possibility of reducing the financial and emotional drain on society (Hawks, 1989).

There is not any one solution to homelessness. Each community has to ask itself the following questions: Who are the homeless? Why are they homeless? What are the solutions for our community? Each community has to determine which solutions would work best for its homeless people.

1. As an introduction to Competency 4, the facilitator might discuss the extent that government is or is not participating in solving the homeless problem. The facilitator may refer to "Government Sources of Help," Supplement 12, for assistance.

2. The facilitator should help learners understand the importance of not stereotyping homeless people. For example, some may describe a homeless person as a drug addict or someone who is to blame for their troubles. Some may say all homeless people are lazy and that they do not want to work or find a home. The facilitator must stress that each homeless person is an individual with shared common problems but a unique history.

3. Determine if learners would have an interest in getting involved in a homeless project with classmates or friends. Example or ideas might include the following:

   - Collect cans of food for abused women and children shelters.

   - Suggest that learners share an activity with a homeless person. If one loves books, they could volunteer to read to homeless children; if one likes sports, they could help organize basketball games or other sports events.

   - Suggest to learners that they donate time to a non-profit or religious organizations who operate soup kitchens and shelters. There is a continuing need for caring volunteers and funds to keep these programs running.

   - Learners may offer a meal, a cup of coffee, a blanket, or pair of gloves. This can be done as part of an organized effort in which a group of people gather essential items and distribute them to people on the streets.

   Note: It is recommended that individuals join agencies to coordinate efforts and to avoid abuse by individuals (some may abuse the system; it may be dangerous to get involved as an individual).

4. The facilitator along with learners may use Supplement 12, "Government Sources of Help," to identify local and government agencies who work with the homeless. Suggest learners interview a resource person from a local agency.

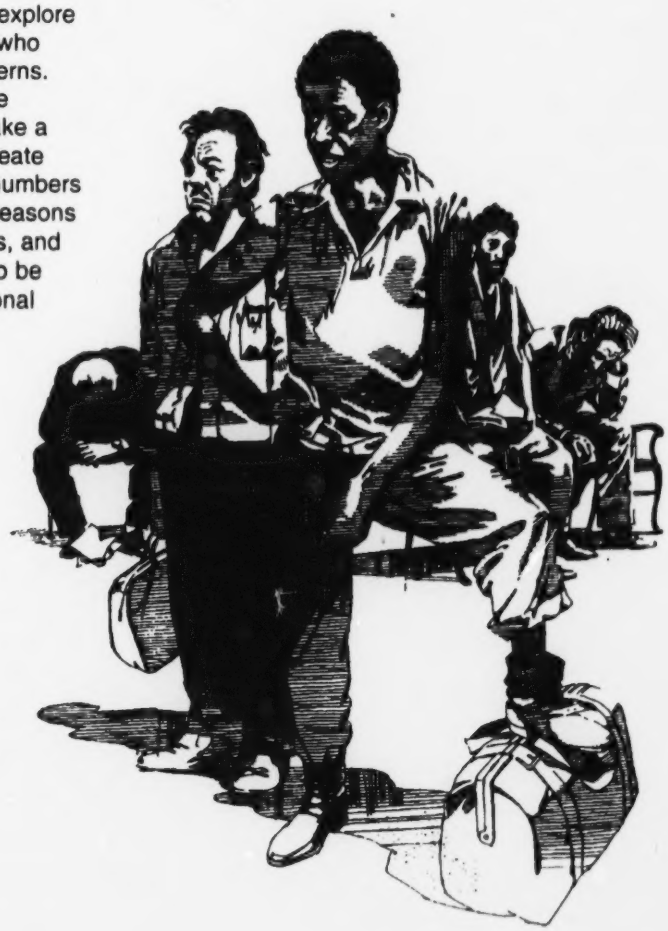
Suggested Activities

1. If appropriate or interested, learners could be helped to express their views about the homeless to Senators and Representatives. Have learners write letters, make telephone calls, and set up appointments to see them when they are in their home districts.

2. Individually or in groups, learner(s) could plan to inform others about homelessness and what can be done to help. Ways to do this could be talking to a group or organization, writing an article for the local newspaper, or by calling in to radio talk shows.

3. Have interested learners explore agencies or local groups who work with homeless concerns. Resource persons may be brought in. (This may make a difference in helping to create public awareness of the numbers of homeless people, the reasons for growing homelessness, and the measures that need to be taken to achieve the national goal of "a decent home and a suitable living environment" for all.)

4. Using Supplement 11, "The Ability To Empathize," have learners role play participants at a town meeting who decide what to do about the homeless people in their community. After the group makes a decision, encourage the learners to explain to the others how they came to their decision on how to help the homeless in their community. See the supplement for directions.



Housing Crises

1. Housing costs are steadily taking a larger part of household income, particularly for lower-income people.

   - What does it mean for a person whose income is near the poverty line to spend 40% or more of his/her household income for housing?

   Ex: Minimum wage $ 4.25/hr.
   X 40 hrs./wk.
   $ 170/wk.
   X 52 wks./yr.
   $8,840/yr.
   X 40% Housing Cost
   $3,536 Spent on housing/yr.

2. Two and a half million people are uprooted from their homes for causes which include the following:

   - Rent increases
   - Changes in income that make rent payments impossible
   - Under repair
   - House unsafe or undesirable
   - Accidental fire or natural damage
   - Conversion of rental units to condominiums
   - Withdrawal of city services from an area in order to get people to leave and ready it for eventual redevelopment
   - Government taking private property for public use (eminent domain)

3. Mortgage delinquencies—foreclosures because of unpaid loans

4. Overcrowding—It is estimated that there are over three million households living in overcrowded conditions—1.01 or more persons per room.

5. Other elements include the following:

   - The continuing presence of substandard and slum conditions in urban and rural areas

   - Housing-related health problems such as neurological damage to children from lead poisoning; fires and asphyxiation caused by improperly installed and vented heating devices used to cope with cold weather and high heating bills; hypothermia resulting from the absence of adequate heating; or death and injury from fires set to collect insurance awards.

Interpersonal Crisis: Spouse/Partner Abuse

Although some families become homeless because of an eviction or job loss, for most becoming homeless was usually precipitated by an interpersonal crisis. Most homeless women report a relationship with a male which dissolved for a reason associated with physical, verbal, emotional abuse, and/or violence. Many of the men with whom they were associated had poor work habits, substance abuse problems, and legal difficulties associated with their violent behavior. Frequently, it is a violent incident which suddenly causes a woman to take her children and leave, thus rendering them homeless.

Obstacles To Getting Help

Many victims remain in an abusive relationship for years. They report that a variety of factors have kept them from seeking help or leaving.

- It may be embarrassing for the woman to talk about the violence that goes on in her home. She may feel that she cannot discuss the problem with anyone, that people will either not believe her or will wonder what she did to provoke the abuse.

- Her abuser may have succeeded in isolating her from those who could provide assistance. He may keep her from making friends and may make it difficult for her to maintain a close relationship with her family.

- Repeated physical, emotional, and verbal abuse may have destroyed her self-esteem and caused lasting physical injury. Her abuser may have convinced her that she is at fault. She may believe that the abuse would stop if only she could be a better wife or make the children behave.

- She may be ignorant of her legal alternatives. A battered woman may not know that she can file assault charges or get an emergency protective order.

- She may truly love her abusive partner. She may fantasize that if she waits just a little longer the abuse will stop (he will get a new job, quit drinking, stop using drugs. . .). The abuser may feed into this fantasy by becoming very loving following a beating. He may shower her with gifts and promises that it will never happen again.

- She may be financially vulnerable. Sometimes she has no job skills and has never worked outside the home; therefore, she fears she cannot support herself and her children. Or she may have given up her job due to her husband's jealousy or because of frequent absences caused by injuries. Many times she does not want to go on welfare or does not know what financial assistance is available.

- She may not know where to go or what resources are available. She may have no friends or relatives with whom she and her children can stay, and she may not know that shelters for battered women are available.

- Her partner may have convinced her that he will harm himself, her, or the children, if she leaves. She may fear that friends or family helping her may also be placed in danger. (It is true that violence may intensify if the abuser believes his partner is making plans to leave, or actually leaves the home.)

- She may believe that it is not fair to the children to disrupt their lives or to take them away from their father.

- She may believe that leaving is a sign of her failure. Her family, religion, or culture may keep her from viewing divorce as an acceptable alternative, and she may fear the stigma of being a divorced woman.

When women finally do leave the abusive partner, they most often return when he promises to change. If he does not seek counseling, he will be unable to make a lasting improvement, and the violence will resume. Studies have shown that a woman will leave 6-7 times before she is finally convinced that he will not change and that she must make a final break if she and her children are to lead a violence-free life.

Source: *Prevention of family violence.* (1989). Frankfort, KY: Department of Education.

SUPPLEMENT 3

Danger Signals of Becoming Homeless

1. **DOUBLING UP**: Homeless people avoid or delay the move to a shelter by doubling up with family and friends. It is a common strategy in the lives of unhoused people, but the arrangement almost always is a dangerous and temporary one. The friends and family able to take in those who have become homeless are often living in substandard or crowded conditions. The burden of additional persons in a home creates problems forcing the homeless individual or family to search for other arrangements. In many cases, the next step is a shelter or the street.

2. **UNDERHOUSED**: Another group of potential homeless people are those living in substandard conditions on the edge of a housing disaster that will make their homes unlivable—a fire, serious housing violations, deteriorated housing that is a result of landlord neglect or beyond the ability of the resident's income to have repaired.

3. **SAVINGS**: Depletion of savings accounts. The use of savings for living between jobs, layoffs, unemployment, health care bills, family crisis, or any major expense that would wipe out a personal savings account. A savings account depleted could be a danger signal of things to come.

4. **LIFESTYLE**: Trying to live the same lifestyle as one did before one encountered problems of unemployment, layoff, health problems, higher taxes, and so on, is dangerous. Lifestyles must be adjusted to allow for variations in income levels. Protecting family from shame and embarrassment is one of the main reasons for wanting to live the same lifestyle.

5. **SUPPORT**: Financial support from family and friends and not being able to repay loans. If one depends on family and friends to help with household expenses or other expenses, the dependency should be considered a danger signal.

6. **UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**: Being involved in a relationship that is unhealthy, abusive, unconditional, or unsteady. Danger signals would be a partner that has a substance addiction, violent temper and behavior, poor work history or no work at all, laziness, and so on.

7. **BAD DECISIONS**: Buying on credit; making bad investments.

8. **MOBILITY**: High activity of moving. Staying in places only temporarily, having to move because of eviction, non-payment of rent, loss of jobs, personal crisis, and so on.

SUPPLEMENT 4

Defining Poverty

In this exercise you will create your own definition of poverty. Consider the men in the following cartoon. Most people would consider a person who does not live in some sort of home or shelter as poor. By this definition, the men in the cartoon are poor. But most people would not consider poor a person who couldn't afford a cabin cruiser. Most people view cabin cruisers as luxuries, not one of life's essentials. What does it mean to be poor?

"There's Always Someone Worse Off Than Yourself."

© Wiles/Rothco

Source: Is poverty in America a serious problem? (1988). In *Opposing viewpoints pamphlets* (p. 55). San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press.

SUPPLEMENT 5

What Does It Mean To Be Poor?

Step I

Working in small groups, discuss the items listed below. Mark E for essential items—things you believe people must have. Mark N for nonessential items—items that are luxuries a person could live without.

_____ three meals a day
_____ cigarettes
_____ private hot shower
_____ heating
_____ a washer and dryer
_____ a car
_____ a VCR
_____ a warm coat
_____ a stereo
_____ a telephone
_____ health care or insurance
_____ post-high school education (college or vocational school)
_____ annual dental and eye checkups
_____ housing with at least one private room
_____ more than five changes of clothing
_____ enough money for occasional snacks, trips to movies
_____ meal at fast-food restaurant once a week
_____ shelter
_____ indoor running water
_____ one "good" outfit of clothing
_____ air-conditioning
_____ a job
_____ a television set
_____ electricity
_____ a refrigerator
_____ a radio
_____ a personal computer
_____ high school education

Step II

Discuss the following questions with the class:

1. Examine your list of essential items. Which ones are actually essential to survival and which are essential to a "humane" existence—a level above the bare survival?

2. Write an item-based definition of poverty: A person suffers from poverty if he or she lacks these items: ___, ___.

3. How absolute is your group's definition? If a person lacked only one of your essentials, is he or she still poor? If a person has several nonessentials but lacks some essentials, is he or she still poor?

Source: Is poverty in America a serious problem? (1988). In *Opposing viewpoints pamphlets* (pp. 56-57). San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press.

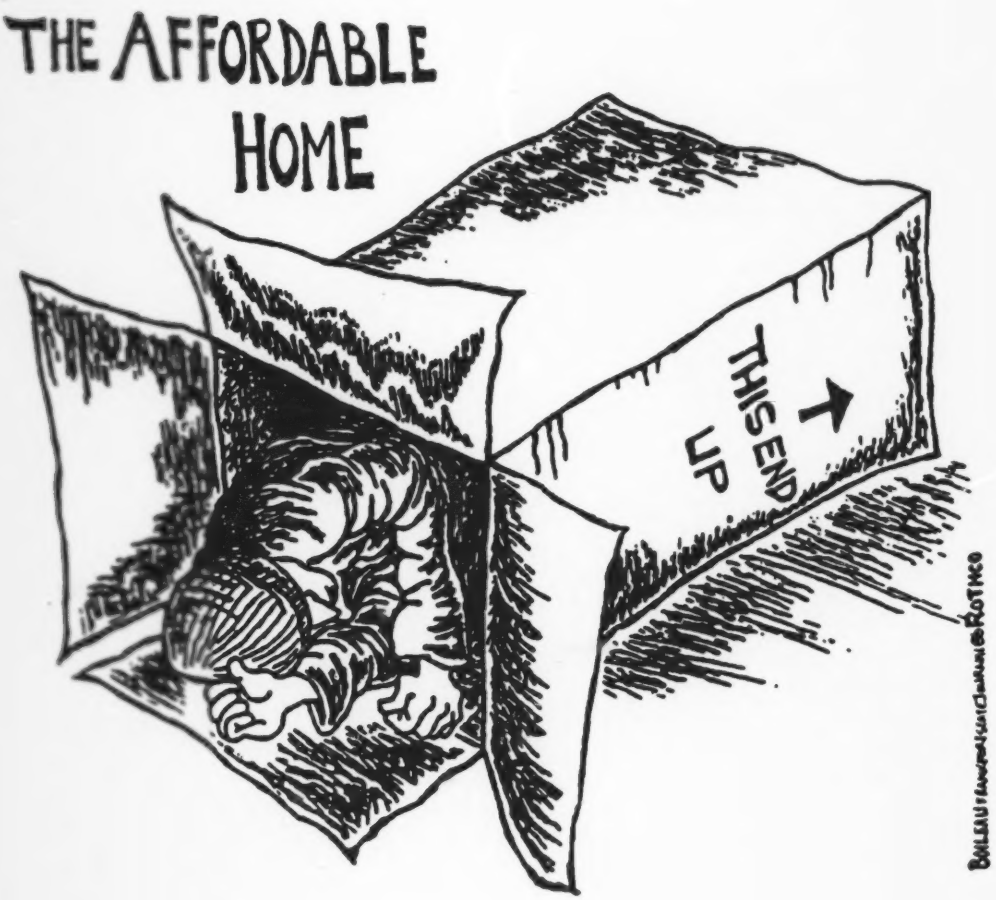
SUPPLEMENT 6

No Permanent Address

Working in small groups, brainstorm problems associated with having no permanent address.

SUPPLEMENT 7

The Affordable Home



© Boileau/Rothco Cartoons

Source: What are the causes of homelessness? (1990). In *Opposing viewpoints pamphlets* (p. 67). (1990). San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press.

SUPPLEMENT 8

Found Spaces

Many homeless persons spend large portions of their days locating found spaces where they can remain without being threatened or harassed. Some of these are visible places such as the fronts or lobbies of buildings, while others are invisible ones, the interstitial spaces of transportation stations, back alleys, and unoccupied apartments of abandoned buildings. Many found spaces are conventional places such as libraries, movie houses, parks, and benches, but the functions they serve in the lives of the homeless persons using them differ from those of other occupants. For homeless people, these places are shelters in the broadest sense of the word, "living rooms" where they pass the time, keep warm or cool—places to which they can go without being chased, and places where they feel comfortable or protected. While in the spaces, the homeless users blend in with others; they are camouflaged by the people present and, in some cases, they are totally invisible to outsiders. The depths of transportation stations or the hidden areas of parks may shelter homeless persons without any clear sign that they are there.

Homeless people become expert at detecting the degree of tolerance of the people in the places they inhabit. They must find supportive places where they can groom themselves, where hair and clothing can be washed, and where food can be eaten. This complicated assessment of spaces is part of the daily existence of many homeless persons as they calculate the freedoms they have and act on them. At times, this breaks down as a coffee-shop owner protests the presence of shopping bags or a library patron complains about a sleeping neighbor.

For a variety of reasons, including those of safety, many homeless persons prefer to be in public areas. The presence of others acts both to offer protection and also provides a reason or an excuse for being in the place. Spending time in the library or a transportation station allows the behavior of the homeless persons to blend in with the activities of others. It is when they behave in ways that do not conform to the norms of public places—when they fall asleep in the railroad station waiting room or in the library—that the surveillance agents identify them as "inappropriate" to the places and make attempts to remove them. In some cases, homeless people are hidden in public places—in the tunnels under a railroad station, or in the hidden edges of a park, for example.

Self-Help Communities

Approaching the lot, at first glance it looks like any other in the neighborhood, some refuse apparently tossed over the fence, weeds and assorted wild vegetation growing. On closer examination this is no ordinary empty lot. The sign, on a bedsheet, announces, "Homeless, not Criminals," and scattered throughout the site are simply crafted buildings—sheds and shacks. Entering through the opening in the gate, a noisy dog barks your arrival. The lot is alive with people and is filled with their belongings. This is housing to a half-dozen homeless persons who welcome visitors, anxious to share their hospitality with guests and to tell their stories. Over a two-year period, the changes in its physical arrangements, in its inhabitants, and in the problems faced by the people living there were studied. It was impressive to see how the residents survived in makeshift housing, created shelter and services for themselves, and coped with the elements over the seasons. Observation of the differentiated functions of the spaces, the storage shack filled with donated clothing; the sleeping shacks with mattresses; and the multiple-use family shack where visitors were received, community members socialized, meals were prepared and eaten, supplies were stored, and "office" functions performed.

This Shantytown was created by several homeless persons who decided that they could provide better care and services for themselves and for others than was available in the municipal shelter system. It represents one of the strategies that is used by the growing number of homeless people in this country, a strategy that enables them to circumvent the institutional system set up as society's solution to the problem of homelessness and control the resources needed to survive in the absence of permanent housing.

Adapted from Rivlin, L. G., & Imbimbo, J. E. (1989). Self-help efforts in a squatter community: Implications for addressing contemporary homelessness. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 17*(6), 705-728.

Short Story: Being Homeless

A short time ago, Petey Potters had been a construction worker. "Big Jobs," as he liked to boast to anyone whose ear he could get. "World Trade Center. I usta be out on one of them girders. Tell ya, the wind wuz whippin' so ye wondered if ye were gonna stay up there."

But at night the thought of going back up on the girder began to get to Petey. A couple shots of rye, beer chasers, and the warmth would flow into the pit of his stomach and spread through his body.

"You're just like your father," his wife began to scream at him. "A no-good drunk."

Petey never got insulted. He understood. He'd start to laugh when his wife ranted about Pop. Pop had been some card. He'd disappear for weeks at a time, dry out in a flophouse on the Bowery, and then come back home. "When I'm hungry, it's no problem," he'd confided to eight-year-old Petey. "I go to the Salvation Army Shelter, get a meal, a bath, a bed."

Nearly forty years later the memory still tickled the homeless derelict Petey Potters. He'd created his own shelter, a combination of wood and tin and old rags that he'd piled together into a tent-like structure against the sagging, shuttered terminal on the abandoned West Fifty-Sixth Street pier.

Petey's needs were simple. Wine. Butts. A little food. Litter baskets were a constant supply of cans and bottles that could be redeemed for the deposits. When he was ambitious, Petey took a squeegee and a bottle of water and stood at the Fifty-Sixth Street exit of the West Side Highway. No drivers wanted their car windows smeared by his efforts, but most people were afraid to wave him away.

Petey didn't scratch anything (cars) when he was rejected. He just went on to the next car, armed with his squirt bottle, a coaxing smile on his face.

Yesterday had been one of the good days. Just enough snow so that the highway became messy and windshields got sprayed with dirty slush from the tires of cars ahead of them. Few people had refused Petey's ministrations at the exit ramp. He'd made eighteen dollars, enough for a sandwich, butts, and three bottles of wine.

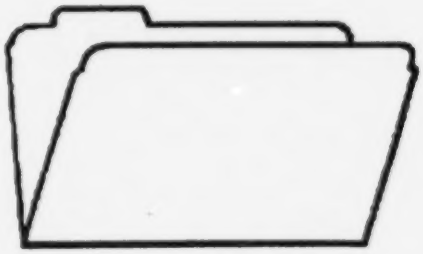
Last night he'd settled inside the tent, wrapped in the old army blanket the Church on Second Avenue had given him, a ski cap keeping his head warm, a tattered coat, its moth-eaten fur collar cozy around his neck. He'd finished the sandwich with the first bottle of wine, then he settled down to puffing and sipping, content and warm thinking of Pop; mom coming back to the apartment on Tremont Avenue, worn out from scrubbing other people's houses; and Birdie, his wife.

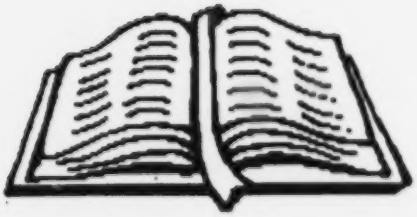
Petey wasn't sure when he heard the car pull up. He tried to force himself to wakefulness, instinctively wanting to protect his territory. It better not be cops trying to knock over his place. Nah. Cops didn't bother with his kind.

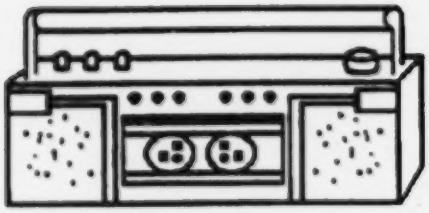
Adapted from Clark, M. H. (1992). *Loves music, Loves to dance*. New York, NY: Pocket Books. (fiction book).

SUPPLEMENT 10

Objects of Resourcefulness







SUPPLEMENT 11

The Ability To Empathize

This exercise is designed to improve the learners' problem-solving skills through empathizing: the ability to understand situations from another's point of view.

In this activity, the learner and his or her group are asked to imagine themselves as participants at a meeting to decide what to do about the homeless people in their community. Each group member will play the role of one of the key figures in the decision-making process.

The Situation:

In recent months, homeless people have migrated to the community of _____and have been setting up residence in the town park. Many residents have complained about their appearance and behavior. Working with local church groups, the town has constructed a makeshift shelter in the basement of the old city hall, but some of the homeless refuse to stay there, saying they would rather live in the park.

Two proposals have been made. One would make it a crime to sleep overnight on public property, punishable by a thirty-day jail sentence or a one-way bus ticket out of town (depending on whether the jail was full). The other proposal, at considerably greater expense, would improve the shelter to include private rooms, a mental health treatment center, and job counseling. When the remodeling was completed, all homeless people would be required to live in the improved shelter.

The Roles:

a town council member—who is worried about costs and taxes, and whether an improved shelter would attract more homeless to the area.

an activist—from the National Coalition for the Homeless, who is not a resident of the community.

a parent—whose children are afraid to play in the park.

a psychologist—who works with the homeless in his/her spare time.

a homeless person—who lives in the park, refuses offers of help, and may or may not be mentally ill.

The group should discuss which proposal to recommend, if any. Each person should take one of the roles listed and argue that person's point of view. Try to imagine and explain that person's feelings about the issues involved.

After the group makes a decision, prepare a written rationale to present to the rest of the group in which they explain how they came to their decision.

Source: How should society deal with the homeless? (1988). *Opposing viewpoints pamphlets* (pp. 140, 141). San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press.

SUPPLEMENT 12

Government Sources of Help

Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

Emergency Food and Shelter Program

Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act

1. Health care
2. Community-based mental health services for homeless individuals who are chronically mentally ill
3. Emergency shelter
4. Transitional housing, especially for the elderly and homeless families with children
5. Community services to provide follow-up and long-term services
6. Job and literacy training
7. Permanent housing for handicapped homeless persons
8. Grants for groups to renovate, convert, purchase, lease, or construct facilities

Interagency Council on the Homeless—independent council to coordinate federal homeless assistance programs

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Homeless Assistance Programs of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Homeless Assistance Programs of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Homeless Assistance Programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Homeless Assistance Programs of the Department of Education

1. Adult Education for the Homeless
2. Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Homeless Assistance Programs of the Department of Labor

1. Job Training for the Homeless Demonstration Program

Information on Federal Property Disposition Programs

Information on the Interagency Council on the Homeless

Hotline at (202) 265-2506 to hear a recorded message on what you can do to support action on behalf of homeless people.

National Coalition for the Homeless
1621 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 265-2371

National Coalition for the Homeless
105 East 22nd Street
New York, NY 10010
(212) 460-8110

Children's Defense Fund
122 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787

The Hunger Project
1388 STTR Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

Illinois Department of Public Aid

Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs

Community and Local Sources of Information

Southern Illinois Coalition for the Homeless
Director
"Homeless to Homeowner" Families pay 28% of their monthly income for rent until the purchasing cost of the house is paid, at which time they become homeowners.

Anna Bixby Women's Center
Director
Homeless Youth Advocate
Harrisburg, IL 62946

The Family Crisis Center
Executive Director
West Main Street
West Frankfort, IL

Carbondale Inter Church Council
Carbondale, IL

Shawnee Development Council
Karnak, IL

Southern Seven Health Department
Ullin, IL

Volunteer Services, Inc.
Marion, IL

Williamson County Family Crisis Center
Marion, IL

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Assisting At-Risk Populations – Notes

WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: THE CHALLENGE AND THE VISION

VISION STATEMENT

As we approach the 21st century, there is broad-based agreement that the education we provide for our children will determine America's future role in the community of nations, the character of our society, and the quality of our individual lives. Thus, education has become the most important responsibility of our nation and our state, with an imperative for bold new directions and renewed commitments.

To meet the global challenges this responsibility presents, the State of Illinois will provide the leadership necessary to guarantee access to a system of high-quality public education. This system will develop in all students the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that will enable all residents to lead productive and fulfilling lives in a complex and changing society. All students will be provided appropriate and adequate opportunities to learn to:

- communicate with words, numbers, visual images, symbols and sounds;
- think analytically and creatively, and be able to solve problems to meet personal, social and academic needs;
- develop physical and emotional well-being;
- contribute as citizens in local, state, national and global communities;
- work independently and cooperatively in groups;
- understand and appreciate the diversity of our world and the interdependence of its peoples;
- contribute to the economic well-being of society; and
- continue to learn throughout their lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

The State Board of Education believes that the current educational system is not meeting the needs of the people of Illinois. Substantial change is needed to fulfill this responsibility. The State Board of Education will provide the leadership necessary to begin this process of change by committing to the following goals.

ILLINOIS GOALS

1. Each Illinois public school student will exhibit mastery of the learner outcomes defined in the State Goals for Learning, demonstrate the ability to solve problems and perform tasks requiring higher-order thinking skills, and be prepared to succeed in our diverse society and the global work force.

2. All people of Illinois will be literate, lifelong learners who are knowledgeable about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and able to contribute to the social and economic well-being of our diverse, global society.

3. All Illinois public school students will be served by an education delivery system which focuses on student outcomes; promotes maximum flexibility for shared decision making at the local level; and has an accountability process which includes rewards, interventions and assistance for schools.

4. All Illinois public school students will have access to schools and classrooms with highly qualified and effective professionals who ensure that students achieve high levels of learning.

5. All Illinois public school students will attend schools which effectively use technology as a resource to support student learning and improve operational efficiency.

6. All Illinois public school students will attend schools which actively develop the support, involvement and commitment of their community by the establishment of partnerships and/or linkages to ensure the success of all students.

7. Every Illinois public school student will attend a school that is supported by an adequate, equitable, stable and predictable system of finance.

8. Each child in Illinois will receive the support services necessary to enter the public school system ready to learn and progress successfully through school. The public school system will serve as a leader in collaborative efforts among private and public agencies so that comprehensive and coordinated health, human and social services reach children and their families.

Developed by citizens of Illinois through a process supported by the Governor, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Business Roundtable. Adopted as a centerpiece for school improvement efforts.

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ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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Michael W. Skarr, *Chairperson, Illinois State Board of Education*
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